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MEMOIRS

OF

MADAME JUNOT

DUCHESSE D'ABRANTÈS

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. I.

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WITH NUMEROUS PORTRAITS ON STEEL

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THE GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION,
FROM 1789-1801.

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Junot

DUKE OF ABRANTES.

Junot

LONDON, RICHARD BENTLEY & SON, 1883

MEMOIRS OF MADAME JUNOT

DUCHESSE D'ABRANTÈS

PREFACE.

A DEMAND has arisen for a new edition of the *Memoirs of Madame Junot, the Duchesse d'Abrantès.*

This new edition of a work which has been scarce for some years has been carefully revised, and is now presented to the public in a form which, it is hoped, will meet with favour.

The interest of the recollections of Madame Junot is undoubted. Her patriotic feelings may sometimes betray her into exaggeration and even occasional inaccuracy, and her satirical vein may lead her at times into misrepresentation, but in the main her Memoirs are a most valuable contribution to the history of the inner life of the Court of Napoleon; while the unaffected naturalness of her descriptions, and her very minute details, render her narrative as charming and as interesting as the liveliest romance.

The Napoleonic period will ever remain one of transcendent interest. The upheaval of society caused by the French Revolution; the rise of Napoleon, his marvellous successes, the manner in which all Europe became implicated in the great struggle he made for empire over it, the Nemesis at Moscow and in Spain, and the fall at Waterloo, are so many scenes in a drama which interested and still interests the whole world.

LONDON, *February* 13, 1883.

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INTRODUCTION.

EVERYBODY nowadays publishes Memoirs; every one has recollections which they think worthy of recording. Following the example of many others, I might long ago have taken a retrospective view of the past; I might have revealed a number of curious and unknown facts respecting a period which has rivetted the interest of the world; but the truth is, I was not, until recently, infected with the mania which is so universal of memoir writing. I felt a certain degree of vexation whenever I observed an announcement of new memoirs.

I entered into life at a period fertile in remarkable events, and I lived in habits of daily intimacy with the actors of the great political drama which has engrossed the attention of Europe for thirty-five years. It will therefore be difficult for me to refrain from speaking of individuals when events bring them forward on the scene. This will be disagreeable, but I cannot help it.

I have witnessed, and have even been engaged in many of the exciting scenes which occurred during an epoch of wonder and horror; and though I was at the time very young, every incident remains indelibly engraven on my memory. The importance of events on which the fate of a great nation depended could not fail to influence the bent of my mind. This influence, I imagine, must have been felt by all women who have been my contemporaries. With regard to myself at least, I can confidently affirm that I retain no recollection of the joys of early childhood—of the light-heartedness which at that period of life annihilates sorrow, and leaves behind an

imperishable impression. No sooner did my understanding begin to develop itself than I was required to employ it in guarding all my words and gestures; for at the period to which I allude the veriest trifle might become the subject of serious investigation. Even the sports and games of childhood were rigorously watched, and I shall never forget that a domiciliary visit was made to our house at Toulouse, and my father was on the point of being arrested because, while playing at the game called La Tour, prends garde! *I said to a little boy of five years old, "You shall be* Monsieur le Dauphin." *Continual danger imposed on every individual the obligation of not only guarding his own conduct, but observing that of others. Nothing, however trifling, was a matter of indifference to the heads of families and those who surrounded them; and the child of ten years old became an observer. It was in the midst of these torments that my first years were passed: later on our lives resumed their normal course, and a mother of a family ceased to tremble for the fate of a father and a husband. At the period to which I refer the misfortunes of France were at their height. The impressions which I then imbibed are perhaps the strongest I ever experienced. Hitherto my eye and my ear had been attentive; I observed and listened with avidity. The nature of my education no doubt contributed to strengthen my mind. My studies were not of a superficial kind, but were those usually allotted to young men. My father, who loved me tenderly, had me educated in his own house and under his own superintendence.*

It has frequently been said that the Revolution had a fatal influence on education. This is untrue. One branch of education, viz. good manners, *certainly experienced a check from which it will not easily recover. This is unfortunate. The want of that courtesy and urbanity which conferred on France the reputation of the politest of nations is perhaps an obstacle to those intimate relations which unite together the different parts of society. I therefore regard the loss of that politeness which once distinguished us as a matter of more importance than it is sometimes considered; vulgarity and impertinence have replaced it, without even frankness and*

generosity to render them pardonable. On the other hand, education has gained materially by the total change it has undergone. No doubt the revolutionary turmoil of 1793 and 1794 threw impediments in the way of private education. On the important subject of religious instruction, for example, great difficulties were experienced; every one educated in the schools suffered in this respect; but parents themselves (I speak here of the general mass) instilled the first principles of religion into the minds of their children.

As to young men, if they were for a time deprived of the advantages of universities and public schools, it is certain that a career was opened to them much more fertile in its results than was the old-fashioned routine of instruction pursued by the mimic monks in their colleges. In those days of trouble and disaster the rising generation, who were frequently obliged to brave death, proscription, and misery, and on whose prudence frequently depended the lives of all who were dear to them, received instructive lessons from the appalling events which passed before their eyes. Women, too, acquired a degree of prudence and a spirit of observation which were highly useful to them in every relation of life; and they learned the value of that real talent and solid information which could be turned to useful account in earning a livelihood. Young men imbibed a hatred of oppression, a love of glory, and a contempt of death, which rendered them invincible; they acquired a knowledge of their own rights and of those of their country. With these men Bonaparte conquered Italy: with these men he marched to regenerate ancient Egypt. One of them commanded and fell at Novi when he had scarcely completed his thirtieth year, while in Paris a young man of the same age was thought worthy to preside in the Convention.

About this period the private interests of my family became, as it were, linked with the public interests. Between my mother and the Bonaparte family the closest friendship subsisted. He who afterwards became the master of the world lived long on a footing of intimacy with us. He used to frequent my father's house when I was yet a child, and he scarcely a young man. I may almost say that I have

witnessed every scene of his life; for being married to one of those men who were devotedly attached to him, and constantly with him, what I did not myself see I was accurately informed of. I may therefore fearlessly affirm that of all the individuals who have written about Napoleon few are so competent as myself to give a detailed account of him. My mother, who was the friend of Lætitia Bonaparte, knew him from his earliest youth. She rocked him in his cradle, and, when he quitted Brienne and came to Paris, she guided and protected his younger days. Not only Napoleon, but his brothers and sisters formed part of our family. I shall presently speak of the friendship which arose between myself and Napoleon's sisters, a friendship which one of them has entirely forgotten. When my mother quitted Corsica to follow my father to France, the friendly relations which subsisted between her and the Bonaparte family suffered no change by absence or distance. The conduct of my parents towards Bonaparte, the father, when he came to Montpellier with his son and his brother-in-law, to die far from his country and all that was dear to him, should never be forgotten by either of the two families. It should be remembered by the one with gratitude, and by the other with that feeling of satisfaction which the performance of a good action creates. The other members of the Bonaparte family were also favourites of my mother. Lucien found in her more than a common friend. When he formed that strange union with Mademoiselle Boyer my mother received his wife as her own daughter. Of our intimacy with Madame Joseph Bonaparte and Madame Leclerc the details into which I shall enter in the course of these volumes will afford an accurate idea. My husband's connection with Bonaparte commenced with the siege of Toulon, and from that time they continued united until Junot's death. Thus, I may say, that without having been always near Bonaparte, I possessed the most authentic means of being accurately informed of every action, private or public. It will be understood by what I have here stated that while I profess to be the only person who perfectly well knew every particularity of Napoleon, it is not mere presumption that prompts me to say so; the details which will be

found in the following pages I derive from other sources than those which usually feed biographical sketches.

I shall commence this work by some details respecting my family and some distinguished individuals, such as Paoli, at the time when he diffused a ray of light upon his barbarous country. I shall relate my conversations (of which I kept memoranda) with MM. de Romansoff, Marcoff, Kalischeff, and Dirschkoff, who enjoyed the intimacy of the Czarina,[1] and acquainted me with the real causes of the Greek insurrection of 1770. As my family took an active part in the events of that period, I cannot be altogether uninformed about them.

I shall speak of Corsica, the adopted country of the family of Comnena, and of the Greek origin of the Bonaparte family. The tomb of the Giant of glory rivets the interest of the world, therefore his birthplace cannot be a matter of indifference. The first part of these Memoirs will describe the dawn of that Revolution to all the vicissitudes of which I was a witness. Perhaps it will be said that I was too young to observe and to retain in my memory all that passed at that period. I have already said that being a passenger on board the vessel that was continually tossed by the storm, the least movement and the track it was taking were to me a constant source of reflection. I repeat once more that in those times we had no ordinary youth. Another part of these volumes will comprise a terrible moment of my existence—that sanguinary period when the French people seemed for a while to vie in ferocity with the wild beasts of the desert. But the military flag soon rallied under its protecting shade the honour and glory of France; and with magical rapidity the triumph of her arms was witnessed on the banks of the Rhine, on the summit of the Alps, in the marshes of Holland, on the lake of Zurich, and, above all, on the plains of Italy. Victory accompanied our armies, and wheresoever they went

[1] *The Abbé Perrin, who resided for many years in the house of Count Panin, whose children he was tutor, furnished me with a number of details respecting the barbarous court of Russia, the death of Peter and Paul, and other affairs of high interest, which might appear incredible if they rested on any authority but that which, like the Abbé Perrin's, is unquestionable.*

their track was marked by their blood. I am proud to say that the blood which flows in the veins of my sons was not spared by their father in the service of his country. But those days, so brilliant in our camps, were dull and gloomy in our cities; the latter were a prey to civil dissension. The terror of massacre had been succeeded by a terror no less frightful, produced by the continual conflict between anarchy and power. The termination of this conflict was the more doubtful, for anarchy was fostered in an element but too favourable to its growth, while on the other hand power, which was almost always usurped by force, and never delegated by a reasonable majority, could neither be awarded nor exercised without a struggle. Such contests always terminate in revolutions, and how many have we not seen! How often, when listening to the discussions which were maintained around me, have I heard the destruction of my unfortunate country predicted! Alas! France was doomed to linger out a longer career of misfortune! What was done one day was undone the next; but it is not so easy to build up as to pull down, and in France the truth of this commonplace proverb was forcibly verified. Next succeeded the Directorial reign—that monstrous union of anarchy, tyranny, and weakness. I saw those Pasquin Kings, *in whose hands the sceptre was a mere club, with which they struck until the blow became a wound. Their reign terminated, the Consulate marked the dawn of a new era, and France once more rose from amidst wreck and ruin. Next came the days of the Empire—that great and prodigious wonder! Doubtless the true republican regretted his invaded rights; but where is the French heart that does not beat at the recollection of that era of glory—on hearing the names of those men who marched to battle as they would go to a fête—who purchased a victory by a scar, and proclaimed France the mistress of nations from the Vistula to the Tagus? Thus I beheld the star of our prosperity at its summit; I saw it wane into obscurity, reappear, and sink a second time. During these changes my heart has been often afflicted; I have suffered deeply, and my silent sorrow has been more bitter than the loud despair of many others. However, it was even some*

gratification to French pride to see all Europe advancing to crush a sovereign of whom but a few days previously it had been the slave.

In preparing these Memoirs how many past recollections have revived! how many dormant griefs have awakened! In spite of the general fidelity of my memory, I occasionally met with dates and facts, the remembrance of which, though not effaced, had faded by the course of time. They were speedily restored; but I must confess that my task has been a laborious and painful one; and nothing could have urged me forward to its execution but the conviction that it must be done. *It may perhaps be alleged that I could have answered in a pamphlet of fifty pages all that has been said: I at first thought of doing so, but I found this impracticable. In taking up the pen my object was to make a complete, not a summary refutation of the untruths that have been advanced. This could not be done in a few lines. It is not my intention to criminate any one; I shall merely state facts, and all shall be supported by* written *evidence. The autographic documents which I have deposited in the hands of my publisher will be open to those who may wish to examine them. Among the attacks aimed at the Duc d'Abrantès, there is one of a very absurd nature. The assailant's memory betrayed him, and by a fortunate chance a letter in his own handwriting falsifies what he has said in his book: there is perhaps nothing more venomous than the sting of ridicule. With regard to what concerns me and my family in the* Mémorial de Sainte Hélène, *I conceive myself in duty bound to reply to it. I have always viewed as the height of absurdity that pride which is founded on an origin more or less illustrious. But if that pride be ridiculous, the usurpation of a great name, a false pretension to noble descent, is the extreme of baseness. Such being my opinion, it will readily be conceived that I am not inclined to pass over in silence that chapter in the* Mémorial de Sainte Hélène *which treats of the family of my mother. I will prove that my grandfather and my uncles, far from setting up false claims to family greatness, wished, on the contrary, to extinguish a noble name, which, when stripped of the*

splendour with which it ought to be surrounded, becomes to its possessors a source of annoyance and humiliation. Such was the intention of my grandfather, the last privileged chief of the Greek colony, a shadow of sovereignty and a toy with which he wished to have no more concern.

He had but one daughter, who was my mother, and he made her vow never to consent to the reassumption of her family name, a vow which I am sure my mother would have religiously kept to this day had she lived. My grandfather died a young man. He was captain of cavalry in the French service (in the regiment de Vallière), a noble Corsican, and not a farmer, *as the* Mémorial de Sainte Hélène *asserts. As to obtaining an acknowledgment of the dignity of the Comnena family, he entertained no such idea. My grandfather died in 1768, and the family was acknowledged in 1782; the letters patent are dated 1783 and 1784.*

I know not if I have expressed the motives which have actuated me to publish this work; they are, however, pure and honourable. I consider the publication of these Memoirs to be a duty to my family, and, above all, to the memory of my husband. Often during political storms a veil is thrown over some part of an illustrious life: the arm of Junot, which for twenty-two years defended his country, is now in the grave, and cannot remove the veil with which jealousy and envy would envelop his fame. It remains, therefore, for me, the mother of his children, to fulfil that sacred duty, and to furnish the materials which can permit him to be fairly judged.

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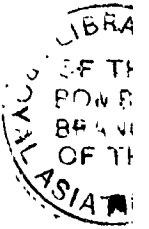
MEMOIRS OF MADAME JUNOT

DUCHESS OF ABRANTES.



CHAPTER I.

The Comnena family—Place and date of my birth—The Greek Colony in Corsica—Constantine Comnenus—Treaty with the Republic of Genoa—Prosperity of the colony—Destruction of the property of the Greeks—My grandfather wishes to resign his name—Abolition of the original rank of the Comnenas in Corsica—Appeal of my uncle Demetrius—Reputed Greek origin of the Bonaparte family.

I WAS born at Montpellier on the 6th of November 1784. My family was then temporarily established at Languedoc, to enable my father the more easily to exercise the duties of an official appointment which he had obtained on his return from America. My mother, like myself, was born beneath the tent which her parents had pitched in a foreign land. From the shores of the Bosphorus her family had emigrated to the solitudes of the Taygeta, which they quitted to inhabit the mountains of Corsica. I shall here insert a short preface relative to my family, as I shall have occasion to revert to it later.

When France became mistress of Corsica by the treaty which she concluded with the Republic of Genoa, her troops had been long attempting the conquest or rather the reduction of that island, on the pretence that they were the allies of the Genoese.[1] But the Corsicans,

[1] This was in the reign of Louis XV. The Duke de Choiseul, then minister for foreign affairs, and the Marquis de la Sorba, plenipotentiary of the Republic of Genoa, concluded the treaty, by the terms of which France was to occupy the island for ten years. At the expiration of that period, when it was expected the spirit of revolt might be quenched, Corsica was to be restored to its masters.

intrenched in their wild rocks, and animated by an ardent love of liberty, set our troops at defiance; and they would never have been subdued had they not committed the error of provoking the hostility of the Greeks of the colony of Paomia, who never forgave them for having ravaged their plains, burned their houses, and destroyed their whole social existence. It required these just grounds of revenge to induce the Greeks to aid in the subjugation of a free people—they who during two hundred years had resisted a great nation in defence of their own rights and liberties.

The Greek colony of Paomia was composed of refugee families whom the senate of Genoa had received, when led by Constantine Stephanopoulos, and flying from the civil discord of their country, they left Mania to seek an asylum in Italy. The Greeks of that part of the Peloponnesus were then subject to a chief: that chief was still one of the Comneni. Constantine Comnenus, the tenth Protogeras of Mania, on the 3d of October 1675 quitted his adopted country, and established himself in another land of exile. He was followed by three thousand individuals, who preferred exile to the slavery of the Mussulmans. The Greek colony landed at Genoa on the 1st of January 1676. The definitive arrangements were concluded between the senate and Constantine Comnenus. When they were signed, the new colonists once more embarked, and arrived in Corsica on the 14th of March 1676. The districts of Paomia, Salogna, and Reviuda, belonging to the Republic of Genoa, were ceded to the Greeks on certain conditions, which Constantine pledged himself should be observed. The senate of Genoa secured to him the title of *Privileged Chief;* and he as well as the whole family of the Comneni were treated with marked honour: the clergy received orders to offer him incense on his arrival.

But the happiness of the colony was of short duration. The colonists of Niolo and Vico became jealous of the new comers, and the protection afforded to them by the Republic. The Greeks enjoyed tranquillity only fifty-

three years, from 1676 to 1729, when the Corsicans rose to emancipate themselves from the yoke of the Genoese. The Vicolesians, taking advantage of the difficult situation in which the Greeks stood, solicited their assistance, which being refused, they destroyed their property. In vain did Cecaldi and Giafferi, the two leaders of the insurrection, desire them to refrain from molesting the Greeks: they continued their violence; plantations were destroyed, and houses burnt. But they gratified their hatred and envy at their own expense; for all Corsica had benefited by the presence of the Greeks. This insurrection crowned the disastrous vicissitudes to which the Greeks had been continual victims for the space of two centuries. The misfortunes of their original country seemed to pursue them in their new asylum! They were obliged to quit Paomia and retire to Ajaccio.

At this time the privileged chief of the Greeks was John Stephanopoulos Comnenus. He was the first of his family born the subject of a foreign power, and he was a man worthy of his Spartan and Messenian descent. With despair he beheld the departure of the colony for Ajaccio. He stood with his arms crossed on his bosom, and saw women, children, and old men abandon an asylum created by their fathers. It was a sight which might justly call forth a vow of vengeance! John Comnenus would not quit the ruins of Paomia until the colony should be in safety on the road to Ajaccio. He stopped behind, and being intercepted by a troop of insurgent Corsicans, he had only time to throw himself with eighty men who accompanied him into the tower of Omigua, an indifferent place on the sea-coast. There he was besieged by more than three thousand Corsicans. Comnenus and his Greeks defended themselves with the courage of lions; but at the expiration of three days their provisions and ammunition failed them. "Shall we surrender?" exclaimed John Comnenus in a tone which indicated that he knew what would be the answer of his faithful followers. "No!" they replied. "Follow me, then," returned their chief, and placing himself at their head he made a sortie from

the fort, attacked the Corsicans, made a great number of prisoners, and returned victorious to Ajaccio.

John Comnenus had five sons, of whom the eldest, Theodore, entered the church, and died at the age of twenty-six, just after he had been created Archbishop of the Greeks in Rome. He was my grand-uncle. Constantine succeeded his father. With the courage and excellent qualifications of John he combined a greater knowledge of the world, which he had acquired in his travels. He was a soldier at twelve years of age, and at seventeen he marched at the head of the Greeks, of whom the Republic of Genoa acknowledged him the privileged chief by a treaty, as it had done with regard to the three chiefs who preceded him. Constantine died young; but though his life was short it was imbittered by trouble. This inspired him, singularly enough, with an aversion for his own origin. This aversion became so strong that he conceived the design of extinguishing his family. This design was confirmed when, on the union of Corsica with France, he experienced the most revolting injustice. He had four children: three sons and a daughter, who was my mother. He made his eldest son John Stephen Comnenus enter the church. The second was sent to Rome to the college of the *Propaganda Fida*, and was also destined for the ecclesiastical profession. The third, who was very young, was also doomed to eternal celibacy, and was to enter the church on attaining the proper age. Thus, when my grandfather died, he quitted the world with the firm conviction that his name would become extinct. On hearing of his father's dangerous illness, my uncle Demetrius left the college of the *Propaganda Fida* and hurried to Corsica. But his father died two days before his arrival. The loss of a parent was not the only grief that awaited him on his natal shore. The original rank which Genoa had secured to his family, by various treaties passed between the Republic and the Comneni, was abolished, and the personal property of the family united to the crown of France. Demetrius was painfully affected at this breach of faith; for it can be called by no other

name, considering the voluntary sacrifices which the Greeks had made for the cause of France. The young chief was then only sixteen. When he attained the proper age, and laid his just claims at the foot of the throne, they were favourably listened to. The government granted him a compensation for his property, which had already been disposed of. As to his other claims, he was informed that the dignity which his ancestors had possessed was incompatible with the usages of the French monarchy; but that he might enjoy all the privileges assigned to nobility, and for that purpose he had only to prove his extraction. After an investigation before the king's council, a direct filiation from David II., last emperor of Trebisonde, who was killed by order of Mahomet II., to Demetrius Comnenus was acknowledged, and confirmed by letters patent of Louis XVI., dated September 1, 1783.

I will now describe the close friendship and intimacy which subsisted between the Bonaparte family and mine. We were indeed united by the bonds of origin as well as of friendship, for it is a curious fact that Napoleon Bonaparte was reputed to be of Greek descent.

CHAPTER II.

Calomeros and Bonaparte—My father's departure for America—Intimacy between my mother and Madame Lætitia—Bonaparte's boyhood—The basket of grapes and the flogging—Saveria and the Bonaparte family—Character of the Corsicans—My father's return—My birth and my mother's illness.

WHEN Constantine Comnenus landed in Corsica in 1676 at the head of the Greek colony, he had with him several sons, one of whom was named Calomeros. This son he sent to Florence, on a mission to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Constantine dying before the return of his son, the grand duke prevailed on the young Greek to renounce Corsica, and fix his abode in Tuscany. After some interval of time, an individual named Calomeros came from Italy—indeed from Tuscany, and fixed his abode in Corsica, where his descendants formed the family of Buonaparte; for the name *Calomeros*, literally Italianised, signified *buona parte* or *bella parte*.[1] The only question is, whether the Calomeros who left Corsica, and the Calomeros who came there, have a direct filiation. Two facts, however, are certain, namely, the departure of the one, and the arrival of the other. It is a singular circumstance that the Comneni, in speaking of the Bonaparte family, always designate them by the names *Calomeros*, *Calomeri*, or *Calomeriani*, according as they allude to one individual or several collectively. Both families were united by the most intimate friendship.

When the Greeks were obliged to abandon Paomia

[1] Napoleon omitted the *u* in Buonaparte while general-in-chief in May 1796.

to escape the persecutions of the insurgent Corsicans, they established themselves temporarily in towns which remained faithful to the Republic of Genoa. When, at a subsequent period, Cargesa was granted to the Greeks for the purpose of forming a new establishment, a few Greek families continued to reside at Ajaccio. Among these was the family of the privileged chief; and my mother lived alternately at Ajaccio and Cargesa. At this time she contracted a friendship with Lætitia Ramolini, the mother of Napoleon. They were about the same age, and both extremely beautiful. Their beauty, however, was of so different a character, that no feeling of jealousy could arise between them. Madame Lætitia Bonaparte was graceful and pretty; but without any filial vanity I may truly say that I never in all my life saw so fine a woman as my mother. At fourteen she was the gayest and most sprightly young girl in the whole colony, and it might be said in the whole island, but for Lætitia Ramolini. Lætitia was indeed a lovely woman. Those who knew her in advanced life thought her countenance somewhat harsh; but that expression, instead of being caused by any austerity of disposition, seemed on the contrary to have been produced by timidity. She was a woman who evinced very superior qualities in all the circumstances in which she was placed, in bad as well as good fortune. Her son rendered her justice, though somewhat tardily. He himself helped to keep up an erroneous opinion respecting her; and though he corrected it, yet the impression was given and received.

Previously to entering into negotiation with the Republic of Genoa, France supplied troops for the purpose of reducing the Corsicans to obedience. Among the French who were connected with the army there was a young man of twenty, possessing an agreeable person. He fenced like the celebrated Saint George, was a delightful performer on the violin, and though distinguished by the elegant manners of a man of rank, he was nevertheless only a commoner. He had said, "I will risk my fortune, and will advance myself in the world;" and he

had said it with that sort of determination which nothing can resist, because it overcomes everything. On his arrival in Corsica he had already an honourable fortune to offer to the lady whom he might wish to make his wife. He fixed his choice on the pearl of the island. He sought and obtained the hand of my mother. This gentleman was M. de Permon, my father.

My parents left Corsica and came to France, where my father's affairs demanded his presence. Some years after, he obtained an important appointment in America, whither he proceeded, taking with him my brother, then only eight years of age. My mother, with the rest of her young family repaired to Corsica, to reside with my grandmother, until my father's return. This was before my birth. It was on my mother's return to Corsica that she first saw Napoleon. He was then a child, and she has often carried him in her arms. He was the playmate of an elder sister of mine, who died a melancholy death. Napoleon recollected her perfectly, and used to speak of her after he came to Paris. He was fond of conversing about Corsica, and often, after having dined at our family table, he would sit before the fireplace, his arms crossed before him, and would say: "Come, Signora Panoria, let us talk about Corsica, and Signora Lætitia." This was the name he always gave his mother when he was speaking of her to persons with whom he was intimate. "How is Signora Lætitia?" he used to say to me—or, when addressing her, he would say: "Well, Signora Lætitia, how do you like the court? You do not like it, I see. That is because you do not receive company enough. I have given you a handsome palace, a fine estate, and a million a year, and yet you live like a citizen's wife of the Rue Saint Denis. Come, come, you must see more company; but company of another kind from the C——s and Cl——de——s." My mother and my uncles have a thousand times assured me that Napoleon in his boyhood had none of that singularity of character which has often been attributed to him. He had good health, and was in other respects like other boys.

Madame Bonaparte had brought with her to France a nurse named Saveria. It was curious to hear this woman speak of the family she had brought up, each member of which was seated on a throne. She related a number of curious anecdotes respecting them, and I used to be very fond of conversing with her. I observed that she was less attached to some members of the family than to others, and I asked her the reason of this. As I know not whether she may yet be living, I will say nothing to compromise her with persons to whom her preference might be offensive. All I shall say is, that she adored the Emperor and Lucien. She one day described to me several little scenes connected with the boyhood of Napoleon, who remained in Corsica until he was nine years of age; and she confirmed to me one fact, which I had frequently heard from his mother, viz. that when he was reprimanded for any fault he seldom cried. In Corsica, the practice of beating children is common in all classes of society. When Napoleon happened to be beat, he would sometimes shed a few tears, but they were soon over; and he would never utter a word in the way of begging pardon. On this subject, I will relate an anecdote which I heard from himself. He told it me to give me an example of moderation.

He was one day accused by one of his sisters of having eaten a basketful of grapes, figs, and citrons, which had come from the garden of *his uncle the Canon.* None but those who were acquainted with the Bonaparte family can form any idea of the enormity of this offence. To eat fruit belonging to the *uncle the Canon* was infinitely more criminal than to eat grapes and figs which might be claimed by anybody else. An inquiry took place. Napoleon denied the fact, and was whipped. He was told that if he would beg pardon he should be forgiven. He protested that he was innocent, but he was not believed. If I recollect rightly, his mother was at the time on a visit to M. de Marbeuf, or some other friend. The result of Napoleon's obstinacy was, that he was kept three whole days upon bread and cheese, and that cheese

was not *broccio*.[1] However, he would not cry: he was dull, but not sulky. At length, on the fourth day of his punishment, a little friend of Marianne Bonaparte returned from the country, and on hearing of Napoleon's disgrace she confessed that she and Marianne had eaten the fruit. It was now Marianne's turn to be punished. When Napoleon was asked why he had not accused his sister, he replied that though he suspected that she was guilty, yet out of consideration to her little friend, who had no share in the falsehood, he had said nothing. He was then only seven years of age.

This fact, which would have been nothing extraordinary in any other child, appeared to me worthy of a place among recollections which are connected with the whole life of Napoleon. It is somewhat characteristic of *the man*. I ought to add that the affair was never forgotten by Napoleon. Of this I observed a proof in 1801, at a *fête* given by Madame Bacciochi (formerly Marianne Bonaparte) at Neuilly, where she resided with Lucien.

Saveria told me that Napoleon was never a pretty boy, as Joseph had been; his head always appeared too large for his body, a defect common to the Bonaparte family. When Napoleon grew up, the peculiar charm of his countenance lay in his eye, especially in the mild expression it assumed in his moments of kindness. His anger, to be sure, was frightful, and though I am no coward, I never could look at him in his fits of rage without shuddering. Though his smile was captivating, yet the expression of his mouth when disdainful or angry could scarcely be seen without terror. But that forehead which seemed formed to bear the crowns of a whole world; those hands, of which the most coquettish women might have been vain, and whose white skin covered muscles of iron; in short, of all that personal beauty which distinguished Napoleon as a young man, no traces were discernible in the boy. Saveria spoke truly when she said that of all the children of Signora Lætitia, the

[1] A favourite kind of cheese in Corsica.

Emperor was the one from whom future greatness was least to be prognosticated. Saveria liked me *tolerably well.* I make use of this expression because she detested France, and the hatred or love of a Corsican must not be measured by the ordinary feelings of mankind. How often has Saveria wept bitterly when she has heard me repeat that beautiful ode on Italy which contains these lines:—

> O Italia, Italia;
> O sia men bella, o almen piu forte!

I obtained some grace in the eyes of Saveria, because, though I was not a Corsican, I was, at least, not a Frenchwoman. I spoke Italian too, and therefore I was not absolutely a savage. Early one morning she came into the room when I was sitting at the piano playing a little song which is sung by the goatherds in the mountains of Corsica, and which I intended to arrange as a *notturno* for two voices for the purpose of singing it to Madame. Saveria heard it, and she stood sobbing behind my chair. I rallied her on her sensibility—"*Basta, basta,*" she exclaimed, *buon sangue non è buggiardo. E si vede, signora mia benedetta, si vede che il vostro è rosso e caldo, si vede. E! che non sicte di questi cani di Francesi! Vi sentite voi, E! . . . .*"[1]

Saveria was a very superior woman in her way. She was a true model of those Corsicans whom the Romans feared to buy for slaves, but every one of whom would lay down his life to serve the master he loved.

The Corsicans felt that there was a sort of bad faith in the conduct of France towards them. At the onset it was the opinion of many of the Corsicans that the French intended to make themselves masters of the country. The character of the man who placed himself at their head speaks volumes for the justice of their cause. Paoli is a great character in history. Who will dare to despise the country which gave birth to him?

[1] "Good blood never belies itself: and, my dear lady, it is easy to see that yours is red and warm, and that you have not sprung from those dogs of French. You can feel."

My family prides itself in its Greek descent, but this is mere absurdity. A race which has lived for two hundred and fifty years in a country must be considered as the children of the soil. My mother, proud as she was of her Greek origin, was, nevertheless, a true daughter of Corsica. When she spoke Italian to Bonaparte, he would sometimes pretend to have forgotten it, and would say he was *a Frenchman.* "Come, come, Napoleon, none of this nonsense," she would say, with that lively air which in her was so peculiarly charming; "What do you mean by *You are a Frenchman?* Does anybody accuse you of being a Chinese? You are a Frenchman, but you were born in one of the provinces of France called Corsica. A man may be an Auvergnese, but he is, nevertheless, a Frenchman. Who would not be proud to be the countryman of Paoli?' No more of this absurdity, or I shall think the honours of your republic have turned your head." In this manner my mother addressed him after the 13th Vendémiaire.

By hearing the expression of my mother's feelings respecting Corsica, I have imbibed a notion of that country very different from that which is usually entertained. How often, during our sanguinary revolution, have I seen my mother weep, while she thought of the mountains of her island! "There every man is free," she would exclaim, while she every moment trembled lest she should be dragged to the scaffold. But the recollection of poor Saveria has led me far out of my course. I will now return to Ajaccio, where I left my mother and her two children.

During her residence in that place my mother renewed her intimacy with her friend Lætitia and her children. Napoleon was then in France. On her return thither my mother promised her good offices in favour of the young Corsican if he should be in want of friends at such a distance from his family. A coldness subsisted between M. Charles Bonaparte and my mother's family, from what cause I know not: however that is a matter of very little importance.

At the close of the American war my father returned to his country, where he purchased the situation of receiver-general of departmental taxes. The duties of this situation caused him to fix his abode temporarily at Montpellier, and an event which had wellnigh been attended with fatal consequences, detained him there far beyond the period he had fixed upon. My mother was at that time pregnant with me. She was in perfect health, and there was every reason to believe that her delivery would be attended with a favourable result. On the 6th of November, after having supped with Madame de Moncan, the wife of the second commandant of the province, she returned home quite well and in excellent spirits. At one o'clock she retired to bed, and at two she was delivered of a daughter. Next morning it was discovered that her right side and part of her left were struck with paralysis. The physicians of Montpellier, a town then celebrated for medical science, prescribed for her in vain. They could neither relieve her disease nor discover its cause. My poor mother spent three months in agony: she was scarcely able to articulate. At length she was cured, and her cure was no less extraordinary than her illness.

A countryman who brought fruit and vegetables for sale to the house, one day saw the female servants weeping in great distress. He inquired the cause, and was informed of the situation of my mother. He requested to be conducted to my father; "I ask for no reward," said he, "but from what I have heard from your servants I think I know the nature of your lady's illness, and if you will permit me I will cure her in a week."

My father was at that moment plunged in the deepest despair; for he had that very morning heard from the physicians that my mother was in great danger, and they afforded him no hope of her recovery. In that hour of anguish he very naturally seized at anything which could afford the slightest chance. "What effect does your remedy produce?" said he to the countryman. The man replied that it was topical, and, therefore, unattended by any danger to the organs of life; but he admitted that

its application would be attended with the most excruciating pain. My father summoned the doctors who were in attendance on my mother, All were men of acknowledged talent. "Nature is unbounded in her benefits," said M. Barthès, "how do we know what she may have in reserve through the hands of this man? Let him try his remedy." My mother was asked whether she felt sufficient strength to undergo an increase of pain. She declared she would submit to anything. She had already relinquished all hope of life. The countryman asked permission to return home. His village was not far off, and he promised to return next morning. My father was alarmed when he heard that the man came from Saint Gilles;[1] but the man appeared perfectly sane. His preparations were rather methodical. He made five little round loaves or rolls: the dough was compounded by himself. The efficient ingredients were of herbs which he gathered, and in which consisted his secret. He boiled these herbs, and with their juice, added to a little strong beer, and mixed with maize flour, he made a dough, which he baked into loaves. While they were hot from the oven he cut them into halves, and applied them to the part affected. I have often heard my mother say that no words could convey an idea of the painful sensation she experienced, and have seen her turn pale at the recollection of it. This torture was repeated every day for the space of a week. At the expiration of that time the pain ceased, and she was able to move her limbs. A month afterwards my mother was up and in her balcony.

It is an extraordinary fact, that during her illness she had lost all recollection of her pregnancy and delivery. My father at first supposed that the agonising pain my mother had suffered had alienated her affection from the infant to whom she had given birth. As soon as he observed my mother's indifference towards me he ordered

[1] A village near Montpellier, remarkable for the prevalence of insanity among its inhabitants. Madness may be said to be indigenous at Saint Gilles. There is scarcely a house in the place which does not contain a lunatic apartment.

the nurse to keep me in a distant part of the house. His affection, both for his wife and child dictated this order, for my mother was yet in too weak a state to bear any agitation of mind. In the month of March, about four months after her recovery, my mother was seated in her balcony inhaling the balmy freshness of a spring day. My father was with her, and they were arranging a plan for spending a summer which should compensate for all her recent sufferings. They proposed going to Bagnères. In the midst of their conversation she suddenly shrieked, and with one hand seizing my father's arm, she pointed with the other to a child which a nurse was carrying in the street. She did not know that it was her own, but she exclaimed, "Charles, I have an infant. Where is it? Is not that my child?" My brother, who was seventeen years of age, has often told me that nothing could convey an idea of my mother's joy when her child was placed in her arms. She was to me the fondest of mothers. She insisted on having my cradle placed beside her bed, and the nurse slept in an adjoining chamber. Every morning when I awoke she pressed me to her bosom, and said, "Oh! my dear child, how dearly must I love you to make amends for five months' banishment from your mother's heart!" My beloved parent faithfully kept her word. I have been assured, that for a woman to lose the recollection of her delivery is by no means so wonderful a circumstance as may at first sight appear. Baudeloque, to whom I related the circumstance, told me that he had witnessed more extraordinary cases than that of my mother.

CHAPTER III.

My mother's drawing-room—The Countess de Perigord—The Duchess de Mailly and the Prince de Chalais—Louis XV. and the Countess de Perigord—The Duchess de Mailly and the Princess de Lamballe—Bonaparte's first arrival in Paris—His intention of presenting a memorial to the Minister of War—His character when a young man—His first lodging in Paris.

WE arrived in Paris in 1785. My mother could not reconcile herself to a country life were it ever so agreeable, and my father was equally desirous of returning to town. He had long wished to purchase the office of one of the farmers of public revenue, and at this very juncture M. Rougeau was disposed to sell his situation. Negotiations were immediately opened by the friends of both parties. My father resolved to manage this business personally, and that circumstance determined our hasty journey. My father wished to see a great deal of company, and after the fashion of the time set a day of the week apart for giving dinner parties. My mother possessed every qualification for an agreeable hostess. Her good temper and frankness of manner made her a favourite with everybody: she united to a rare beauty of person, grace, tact, and, above all, a natural intelligence. She was, however, exceedingly deficient in education. She used to say she had never read but one book, Telemachus; but, in spite of that, those who had once enjoyed her conversation never could quit her society without reluctance and regret. How many poets and distinguished literary characters have I seen spell-bound by the charm, not of her person, but of her manners! No one could

tell a story with more piquant originality. Often have my brother and myself sat up until three o'clock in the morning listening to her. But what particularly marked her character was her perfection in that most difficult art of presiding in her drawing-room, or, as the Emperor used to style it, *l'art de tenir son salon.*

Of the friends whom my mother had made at Montpellier she rejoined one at Paris with great satisfaction. This was the Count de Perigord, the uncle of M. de Talleyrand, and the brother of the Archbishop of Rheims. He was governor of the states of Languedoc, wore the *cordon bleu*, and though as great a dignitary as one could wish to see, was still the most amiable and worthy of men. My parents knew him during his presidency, and the friendship they contracted lasted during their lives. His children, the Duchess de Mailly and the Prince de Chalais, inherited their father's excellent disposition, and after his death they gave my mother proofs of their friendship and esteem. Of the Count de Perigord I retain the most perfect recollection. He was very kind to me; and children are ever grateful for attentions bestowed on them. I remember he used often to give me very expensive things, but had I known their value, which I did not, the presents he made me would not have inspired my regard for him more than for any other of our visitors, all of whom were in the habit of making me presents: it was the notice he took of me; his readiness to praise any just or smart remark I made, and his constant desire to save me from reproof: this it was that made me love him. I can see him even now entering the spacious drawing-room of the hotel we occupied on the Quai Conti; treading cautiously with his club-foot, leading me by the hand; for no sooner was his name announced than I was at his side. He, on his part, was never weary of my company; on the contrary, he always encouraged my prattle. I loved him, and painfully regretted his loss.

It was the fate of his wife, the Countess de Perigord, to attract the notice of Louis XV. This degrading distinction could not but be repugnant to the feelings of a

virtuous woman; and the Countess de Perigord saw in it nothing but an insult. She silently withdrew herself from court before the king offered to name her his favourite. On her return the king's attentions were fixed on a new object, and the virtue of Madame de Perigord was all that dwelt upon the memory of the monarch. The Countess's daughter, the Duchess de Mailly, the lady-in-waiting, and cherished friend of Marie Antoinette, died young. The Queen was strongly attached to her. She used to call her *ma grande.*[1] However, notwithstanding this attachment, Madame de Mailly's feelings received a wound sufficiently severe. This was about the period of the rise of the Princess de Lamballe, and many circumstances combined to mortify Madame de Mailly. She was, moreover, in a bad state of health, and gave in her resignation.

Her brother, the Prince de Chalais, was a nobleman in the literal signification of the term. He was a man of the most scrupulous honour, and a most rigid observer of all the forms which belonged to his rank. When a mere youth he was remarked at the court of Louis XVI. as one who was likely to distinguish himself in after years. On his return from emigration, when I saw him at my mother's, I could easily discern that all I had heard of his excellent character was correct.

The Count de Perigord foresaw early the misfortunes which befell the king, and consequently France. He was an enemy to emigration, and used to say that the proper place for men of his order was always near the throne: in peace to adorn it, and in times of trouble to defend it. The refugees at Worms and Coblentz could not seduce him from the path which he considered it his duty to pursue. The unfortunate gentleman nearly became the victim of his resolution.

My mother's first care on arriving in Paris was to inquire after Napoleon Bonaparte. He was at that time in the military school of Paris, having quitted Brienne in

[1] The Duchess de Mailly was very tall. She measured five feet four inches (French measure) without her high-heeled shoes.

the September of the preceding year. My uncle Demetrius had met him just after he alighted from the coach which brought him to town; "And truly," said my uncle, "he had the appearance of a fresh importation. I met him in the Palais Royal, where he was gaping and staring with wonder at everything he saw. He would have been an excellent subject for sharpers, if, indeed, he had had anything worth taking!" My uncle invited him to dine at his house; for though he was a bachelor, he did not choose to dine at a coffee-house. He told my mother that Napoleon was very morose. "I fear," added he, "that that young man has more self-conceit than is suitable to his condition. When he dined with me he began to declaim violently against the luxury of the young men of the military school. After a little he turned the conversation on Mania, and the present education of the young Maniotes, drawing a comparison between it and the ancient Spartan system of education. His observations on this head he told me he intended to embody in a memorial to be presented to the Minister of War. All this, depend upon it, will bring him under the displeasure of his comrades, and it will be lucky if he escape being run through."

A few days afterwards my mother saw Napoleon, and then his irritability was at its height. He would scarcely bear any observations, even if made in his favour, and I am convinced that it is to this uncontrollable irritability that he owed the reputation of having been ill-tempered in his boyhood and splenetic in his youth. My father, who was acquainted with almost all the heads of the military school, obtained leave for him sometimes to come out for recreation. On account of an accident (a sprain if I recollect right) Napoleon once spent a whole week at our house. To this day, whenever I pass the *Quai Conti*, I cannot help looking up at a garret window at the left angle of the house on the third floor. That was Napoleon's chamber when he paid us a visit, and a neat little room it was. My brother used to occupy the one next to it. The two young men were nearly of the

same age: my brother perhaps had the advantage of a year or fifteen months. My mother had recommended him to cultivate the friendship of young Bonaparte; but my brother complained how unpleasant it was to find only cold politeness where he expected affection. This repulsiveness on the part of Napoleon was almost offensive, and must have been sensibly felt by my brother, who was not only remarkable for the mildness of his temper and the amenity and grace of his manner, but whose society was courted in the most distinguished circles of Paris on account of his talents. He perceived in Bonaparte a kind of acerbity and bitter irony, of which he long endeavoured to discover the cause. "I believe," said Albert one day to my mother, "that the poor young man feels keenly his dependent situation." "But," exclaimed my mother, "his situation is not dependent; and I trust you have not made him feel that he is not quite at home while he stays here."

"Albert is not wrong in this matter," said my father, who happened to be present. "Napoleon suffers on account of his pride, but it is pride not to be censured. He knows you; he knows too that your family and his are in Corsica equal with regard to fortune. He is the son of Lætitia Bonaparte, and Albert is yours. I believe that you are even related; now he cannot easy reconcile all this with the difference in the education he receives gratis in the military school, separated from his family, and deprived of those attentions which he sees here lavishingly bestowed upon our children." "But you are describing envy, not pride," replied my mother. "No, there is a great difference between envy and the feelings by which this young man is disturbed; and I fancy I know the human heart well enough to understand the workings of his. He suffers, and perhaps more keenly in our house than elsewhere. You are warmhearted, but you cannot comprehend how misplaced kindness may sometimes fail to effect a cure. When you wished to make use of the credit of M. de Falgueyreytes to obtain leave of absence for Napoleon for more than a day or

two, I told you you were doing wrong. You would not listen to me. The warmth of your friendship for the mother has caused you to place the son in a continually painful situation; for painful it must be, since the reflection will recur to him: Why is not my family situated like this?" "Absurd," cried my mother; "to reason thus would be both foolish and wicked in him."

"He would be neither more foolish nor more wicked than the rest of the world. It is but feeling like a man. What is the reason he has been in a constant state of ill-humour since his arrival here? Why does he so loudly declaim against the *indecent luxury* (to use his own words) of all his comrades? Why? because he is every moment making a comparison between their situation and his own! He thinks it ridiculous that these young men should keep servants when he has none. He finds fault with two courses at dinner, because, when they have their *picnics*, he is unable to contribute his share. The other day I was told by Dumarsay, the father of one of his comrades, that it was in agitation to give one of the masters a *déjeuné*, and that each scholar would be expected to contribute a sum certainly too large for such boys. Napoleon's reprehension is so far just. Well! I saw him this morning, and found him more than usually gloomy. I guessed the reason, and broke the ice at once by offering him the small sum he wanted for the occasion. He coloured deeply, but presently his countenance resumed its usual pale yellow hue. He refused my offer." "That was because you did not make it with sufficient delicacy," cried my mother. "You men are always such bunglers."

"When I saw the young man so unhappy," continued my father, without being disconcerted by my mother's warmth of manner, to which he was accustomed, "I invented an untruth, which heaven will doubtless pardon. I told him that before his father expired in our arms at Montpellier, he gave me a small sum to be applied to the wants of his son in cases of emergency. Napoleon looked at me steadfastly, with so scrutinising a gaze, that he almost intimidated me. 'Since this money comes from

my father, sir,' said he, 'I accept it; but had it been a loan I could not have received it. My mother has already too many burthens, and I must not increase them by expenses beyond my means, particularly when they are imposed upon me by the stupid folly of my comrades.' You see, then," continued my father, "if his pride is so easily wounded at the school by strangers, what must he not suffer here, whatever tenderness we may show him? Albert must not be less kind and attentive to him; although I very much doubt whether it will lead to any mutual friendship."

CHAPTER IV.

Death of Bonaparte's father in my mother's house—Joseph Bonaparte and M. Fesch—Removal of my family to Paris—Details and portraits—M. de Saint Priest, M. Séguier, and M. Duvidal de Montferrier—Madame de Lamarlière—A wedding-feast at Robespierre's—The Queen at the Conciergerie and Madame Richard—MM. d'Aigrefeuille and Cambacérès.

I MUST now recur to some events previous to those detailed in my last chapter: for this little derangement of dates I trust the reader will pardon me.

While we were residing at Montpellier, my father, on returning home one day, told my mother a curious piece of news: he said he had just heard that three Corsicans had arrived at a miserable inn in the town, and that one of them was very ill. "Is it possible?" exclaimed my mother with her usual animation of manner. "Go and inquire, I beg of you. How can you come and tell me that one of my countrymen is ill at an inn in Montpellier? Charles, this is unkind in you." With these words my mother almost forced my father out of the house. On his return she learned with mingled feelings of grief and joy that her sick countryman, for whom she had felt interested while he was unknown to her, was no other than the husband of Lætitia Ramolini! "He is very ill," said my father; "and I think he cannot be well attended where he is. We must get him removed to a private house." "My dear," observed my mother, "recollect how much you suffered when you fell ill at Philadelphia, with no one to attend you but servants and a boy of nine years old. It is our duty to save our friends from such misery." My father did not like the Corsicans. He was willing to

show M. Bonaparte all the attention which his situation demanded; but it required all the influence of my mother to induce him to receive the invalids into his house.

Some of the numerous friends we had at Montpellier, many of whom are still living, have often described to me the praiseworthy conduct of my mother on that occasion. She was young, beautiful, and rich, and surrounded by a circle of admiring friends; and yet she was seldom from the bedside of the sick stranger. All that fortune could procure to alleviate the sufferings of a protracted illness was furnished by my parents with a delicacy which concealed from the invalid and his relations the difficulty which was frequently experienced in gratifying the capricious wishes of a dying man. I say nothing of pecuniary sacrifices; but kindness of heart certainly deserves gratitude. My mother was at M. Bonaparte's bedside when he breathed his last, like an angel sent from heaven to soothe his dying moments. He strongly recommended to her his young son Napoleon, who had just left Brienne and entered the military school at Paris.[1]

My mother did not confine herself to her pious attention to the husband of her friend. Joseph Bonaparte and his uncle Fesch received from her and my father all the consolation which friendship can offer to an afflicted heart; and when they departed for Corsica, every thing that could contribute to the comfort of their journey was provided by my father. I have seen Joseph Bonaparte often since that time; and he constantly alluded to the infinite obligations he lay under to my family. Excellent man! For King Joseph I always entertained a high respect. The world has been unjust to him as well as to other members of his family, because he had been guilty of some venial faults which would have been passed over in the chivalrous reign of Louis XIV., applauded in the profligate reign of Louis XV., and tolerated in the degenerate reign of Louis XVI. But he laid his conduct open to censure. And in what place? In Spain. And why? Because, perhaps, the mistress of the Grand In-

[1] Napoleon left Brienne on the 14th of October 1784.

Charles Bonaparte

FATHER OF NAPOLEON

quisitor became his favourite. Joseph Bonaparte left Montpellier with his uncle, who was about his own age, if, indeed, he was not something younger.

My parents removed from Languedoc to Paris. They left Montpellier with regret, for they left behind them many beloved friends. Death, however, deprived them of several in one year. One of these was M. de Saint Priest, Intendant of Languedoc, a man universally beloved and esteemed. Another loss no less profoundly felt by my father, was that of M. Séguier, of Nismes. In one of those daily excursions which he made either to Narbonne or to the environs of Montpellier, my father met M. de Séguier while he was botanising near the ruins of the temple of Diana. My father had a great taste for botany, and they soon became friends. He used to speak to him of the mountains of Corsica, where he had often lost himself while searching for plants, and of the botanical curiosities which those regions contain. M. de Séguier wished to make a journey thither; but my father wrote to one of his cousins, who, like himself, was a botanist, and the plants were transmitted to France in all their pristine freshness. My father used often to go from Montpellier to Nismes, where he invariably found M. de Séguier either engaged in his favourite science or in antiquarian researches. He died of apoplexy at an advanced age, on the 1st of September 1784. In the following year, the province of Languedoc had to regret the death of its Syndic General, the Marquis de Montferrier, a distinguished friend of art and science, to whom the province of Languedoc is indebted for many of its noblest monuments, particularly the construction of the new *Pont du Guard.*

These three men were the particular friends of my father or mother, and being my countrymen they have a right to this feeble tribute of my respect in a work in which my recollections are the only annals I consult. I have now to notice another friend of my family, whom I cannot pass by without a brief description.

At Saint Roch, near the third pillar of the Chapel of

the Virgin, on the left as you enter by the grand portal, a lady may be seen dressed in black, or in silk of a dark colour. On her head she always wears a very large bonnet of black gros-de-naples, over which is a green veil. The children call her *the lady with the green veil*, and the poor give her the name of *the good lady*. When she enters the chapel it is easy to perceive that she is familiar with the house of God. The beadle, the assistant, and the sacristan, respectfully make their obedience to her. Formerly she used to bring several prayer-books with her; but now she prays without a book, for she cannot see; but she does not pray with the less fervour. Sometimes she joins in the sacred choir, and then, those who are placed near her hear the clear and silvery voice of a young girl, singing to the glory of heaven. The projecting brim of her bonnet conceals the face, but two small white hands counting the beads of a rosary reveal to the curious observer that she who prays so devoutly must be a female of the higher class. When she rises from her seat, or when she sits down, she diffuses around her a delicious perfume: thus affording indication of refinement and elegance. "Who is she?" inquire the surrounding observers. "Is she young? or is she old?" At length she rises to depart. Her head, which has hitherto been inclined downwards, once more salutes the tabernacle. Then, beneath her large bonnet, is perceived a countenance which must once have been beautiful, and which even retains traces of beauty at the age of seventy-four, and after a life of severe suffering. She looks calm and resigned, and it is evident that her hope is not in this world. I call her *Mamma*, for she was present at my birth. She loved me tenderly, and I cherished for her the affection of a daughter. The Countess de Lamarlière (for that is her real name) was the companion and friend of Madame de Provence, as well as of the Countess d'Artois. She therefore had the opportunity of seeing and hearing a great deal that was interesting and extraordinary; and she relates a multitude of anecdotes with a grace and animation scarcely to be expected in one of

her advanced age; in short, she is one of those few remaining living traditions who transport us to a world which will soon appear fabulous.

When Madame quitted France, the Countess Lamarlière could not accompany her, much as she wished to do so. But she was a wife and a mother, and to those ties she was obliged to sacrifice the sentiments of gratitude which animated her heart. She remained in France to suffer persecution and misery. She saw her husband arrested at the head of the troops he commanded, cast into a dungeon, condemned to death, and conducted to the scaffold. She had the courage to implore the mercy of him who never knew mercy: she threw herself at the feet of Robespierre. Madame Lamarlière had then the look of a young woman; a complexion of dazzling brilliancy, a profusion of fair hair, fine eyes and teeth, could not fail to render her exceedingly attractive. Her beauty was perhaps rather heightened than diminished by her despair, when she threw herself at the feet of the dictator, and with a flattering voice implored the pardon of the father of her child. But the axe was in the hand of the executioner, and amidst a nuptial festival[1] Robespierre pronounced the sentence which made a widow and an orphan.

During the examinations preparatory to his trial, M. de Lamarlière was confined in the Conciergerie. The queen was there before him. Madame Lamarlière had permission to go to the prison to visit her husband, and to take him any thing which might comfort him in his captivity. She took the opportunity of conveying to the queen such things as she thought would be agreeable to her. Madame Richard, the wife of the head concierge,

[1] Robespierre that day gave away in marriage the daughter or sister of a carpenter, named Duplay, in whose house he lodged in the Rue Saint Honoré. This Duplay was the president of the jury on the queen's trial. The Countess Lamarlière arrived before the hour fixed for the marriage ceremony, and she was obliged to wait in the dining-room, where the table was laid for the nuptial feast. Her feelings may easily be imagined! However, there she waited, and was introduced to the carpenter's wife, and I believe to Barrère. After she was gone Robespierre said: "That woman is very pretty:—very pretty indeed!" accompanying the observation by some odious remarks.

seeing that the presents thus sent were articles to which there could be no reasonable objection, humanely lent herself to the innocent deception.[1] "Did the queen know who sent the presents?" said I one day to Madame Lamarlière. "No," replied she; "why should I have informed her?" "To receive the reward of your generosity by a grateful word from the unfortunate princess." "Certainly that would have been gratifying to me. But I was then unfortunate myself, and I was actuated by no other motive than that of alleviating the misery of another. However," she added, with a deep sigh, "the queen did know it, and she addressed to me a few words of kind remembrance." I often broached the subject, but I never could get further than this. My poor friend was like a person grievously wounded, whom one fears to touch, even to dress the wound.

Among the individuals whom my parents left with regret at Montpellier, was M. d'Aigrefeuille, president of the *Cour des Comptes* of that town. He was an excellent man, and those who saw him merely in the office of arch-chancellor could know little either of his talents or his worth. It happened that he supped with my mother at Madame de Moncan's on the evening before I was brought into the world; consequently he knew precisely the date of my birth, and he made no secret of this fact. Whenever I dined at his own house or met him in company, he used constantly to repeat:—"On the 6th of November 1784. Come, come, you cannot conceal your age from me." As I was at that time a very young woman, I was not much annoyed at this memorandum.

I will conclude this chapter with a few words relative to an individual who has played a conspicuous part on the scene of life. I allude to Cambacérès. He was

[1] Madame Richard was very attentive to the queen. When the Marquis de Rougeville dropped a carnation, in which a note was concealed, at the feet of the queen, he, as well as all Richard's family, were thrown into the dungeons of La Force. There was also at the Conciergerie a young girl named Rosalie, who furnished Madame Lamarlière with some very interesting details respecting the queen. These details Madame Lamarlière communicated to me.

counsellor of the *Cour des Aides* at Montpellier. At that time he was a mere acquaintance of my parents, and he subsequently became the friend of Junot and myself: whenever I solicited his assistance upon any occasion I always found him ready to serve me. If the thing were impossible he told me so candidly, for he never made deceitful promises. Indeed Cambacérès was an honest man in every sense of the word, and party spirit has vainly endeavoured to assail him. His honour, integrity, and the amiability of his manners, made him generally beloved. Cambacérès was in easy circumstances, though not rich, when he was at Montpellier. He was a relative of the Marquis de Montferrier, whom, as well as d'Aigrefeuille, he remembered when he rose to greatness and power. As to his political life I shall have occasion to speak of that in another place.

CHAPTER V.

Marianne Bonaparte at Saint Cyr—Humbled pride—Bonaparte made sub-lieutenant—His first appearance in uniform—His singular present to my sister—Scene at Malmaison—The Countess d'Escarbagnas and the Marquis de Carabas.

JOSEPH BONAPARTE had addressed a letter to my uncle Demetrius, thanking him for his kind attention to Marianne Bonaparte, who had been placed at the establishment of Saint Cyr. My mother undertook the task of visiting her occasionally, and during the long time which Marianne passed at Saint Cyr, my mother was a kind and affectionate friend to her.

One day my mother and some other members of my family went on a visit to Saint Cyr, and Bonaparte accompanied them. When Marianne came into the parlour she appeared very melancholy, and at the first word that was addressed to her she burst into tears. My mother embraced her, and endeavoured to console her. It was some time before Marianne would tell the cause of her distress. At length my mother learned that one of the young ladies (Mademoiselle de Montluc) was to leave the school in a week, and that the pupils of her class intended giving her a little entertainment on her departure. Every one had contributed, but Marianne could not give anything, because her allowance of money was nearly exhausted: she had only six francs remaining. "If I give the six francs," said she, "I shall have nothing left, and I shall not receive my allowance for six weeks to come: besides, six francs are not enough." Napoleon's first movement, as my mother told me when she related this anecdote, was to

put his hand into his pocket. However, a moment's reflection assured him that he should find nothing there; he checked himself, coloured slightly, and stamped his foot. My mother could not refrain from laughing when she thought of the singular resemblance between the luncheon of Saint Cyr and the breakfast at the military school of Paris, and she mentioned this in Greek to my uncle. The coincidence was easily explained; both the brother and sister were *boursiers* (free pupils) in the schools at which there were at the same time the children of many noble and wealthy families. Now the Bonaparte family were poor: this fact was openly acknowledged by M. Bonaparte, the father, when he wrote to the Minister of War for the purpose of getting Lucien placed at Brienne. A great deal of discussion has been started on the question of the wealth or poverty of the Bonaparte family. The reproaches which have been founded on their supposed poverty are too contemptible for notice; and in my opinion it matters little what were the pecuniary circumstances of the family before they entered upon that career of greatness which the genius and fortune of Napoleon opened to them.

But we will return to Marianne. My mother asked her what money she wanted. The sum was small: ten or twelve francs. My mother gave her the money, and her distress was ended. When they got into the carriage, Napoleon, who had restrained his feelings in the presence of his sister, vented violent invectives against the detestable system of such establishments as Saint Cyr and the military schools. It was evident that he deeply felt the humiliation of his sister. My uncle, who was of a hasty temper, soon got out of patience at the bitterness with which he expressed himself, and made some observations which were not very agreeable to him. Napoleon was silent immediately, for at that time young people were educated in the observance of great respect to those who were older than themselves; but his heart was full. He soon brought back the conversation to the same subject, and at length his language became so violent that my

uncle exclaimed: "Silence! it ill becomes you who are educated by the king's bounty to speak as you do." I have often heard my mother say that she thought Napoleon would have been stifled with rage. He was pale and red in the space of a moment. "I am not educated at the king's expense," said he; "but at the expense of the state." "A fine distinction, truly!" returned my uncle. "Is not the king the state? I will not suffer you to speak thus disrespectfully of your benefactor in my presence." "I will say nothing that may be displeasing to you, sir," replied the young man; "only give me leave to add, that *if I were the sovereign*, and had power to alter these regulations, I would change them so that they should be for the advantage of all."

I need not point the reader's attention to the remarkable words *if I were the sovereign.* When he really did become a sovereign it was well known on what an admirable footing he established his military schools. I am convinced that he long retained the recollection of the painful humiliations he had suffered at the military school of Paris. He certainly was no favourite there. Several of the heads of the establishment, who were acquainted with my father, assured him that young Napoleon Bonaparte possessed a temper which there was no possibility of rendering even sociable. He was dissatisfied with everything, and expressed his dissatisfaction in a way which could not but be disagreeable to his elders, who regarded him as an ill-tempered, wrong-headed youth. His conduct accelerated his departure from the college: his removal was unanimously urged.[1] He obtained a sub-lieutenancy in a regiment of artillery, and he went to Grenoble, Valence, Auxonne, etc., before he returned to Paris.

Previously to his departure he came to pass some time at our house. My sister was then at her convent, but she frequently came home while Napoleon was with us. I well recollect that on the day when he first put on

[1] That is to say, by getting him entered in a regiment. There was no idea of removal in any other way.

his uniform, he was as vain as young men usually are on such an occasion. There was one part of his dress which had a very droll appearance—that was his boots. They were so high and wide that his little thin legs seemed buried in their amplitude. Young people are always ready to observe anything ridiculous; and as soon as my sister and I saw Napoleon enter the drawing-room we burst into a loud fit of laughter. At that early age, as well as in after life, Bonaparte could not relish a joke; and when he found himself the object of merriment he grew angry. My sister, who was some years older than I, told him that since he wore a sword he ought to be gallant to ladies; and, instead of being angry, should be happy that they joked with him. "You are nothing but a child —a little *pensionnaire*," said Napoleon, in a tone of contempt. Cecile, who was twelve or thirteen years of age, was highly indignant at being called a child, and she hastily resented the affront by replying to Bonaparte, "And you are nothing but a *puss in boots*." This excited a general laugh among all present except Napoleon, whose rage I will not attempt to describe. Though not much accustomed to society he had too much tact not to perceive that he ought to be silent when personalities were introduced and his adversary was a woman.

Though deeply mortified at the unfortunate nickname which my sister had given him, yet he affected to forget it; and to prove that he cherished no malice on the subject, he got a little toy made and gave it as a present to me. This toy consisted of a cat in boots, in the character of a footman running before the carriage of the Marquis de Carabas. It was very well made, and must have been rather expensive to him, considering his straitened finances. He brought along with it a pretty little edition of the popular tale of *Puss in Boots*, which he presented to my sister, begging her to keep it as *a token of his remembrance*. "Oh, Napoleon," said my mother, "if you had merely given the toy to Loulou it would have been all very well; but the tale for Cecile shows that you are still offended with her." He gave his word to the con-

trary; but I think with my mother that some little feeling of resentment was still rankling in his mind. This story would probably have vanished from my recollection had I not heard it often told by my mother and brother. My recollection of it was afterwards useful to me in a curious way.

When Bonaparte indulged in raillery he did not use the weapon with a very light hand; and those he loved best often smarted under the blow. Though Junot was a particular favourite of his during the consulate and the first years of the empire, yet he frequently selected him as the object of some coarse joke; and if accompanied by a pinch of the ear, so severe as to draw blood, the favour was complete. Junot, who cherished for him a sentiment of attachment which set every other consideration at nought, used to laugh heartily at these jokes, and then thought no more about them. However, it sometimes occurred that those by whom they had been heard thought proper to repeat them; and it happened that on one occasion this was very annoying to me. One day, when we were at Malmaison, the first consul was in high spirits. We were dining under the trees which crown the little eminence on the left of the meadow before the castle. Madame Bonaparte that day wore powder for the first time. It became her very well, but the first consul did nothing but laugh at her, and said she would do admirably to act the *Countess d'Escarbagnas.* Josephine was evidently displeased at this, and Bonaparte added, "What, are you afraid you will not have a cavalier? There is the Marquis de Carabas (pointing to Junot), he will offer you his arm, I am sure."

The first consul had often before called both Junot and Marmont the Marquis de Carabas; but it was always in perfect good humour. It was, he said, on account of their taste for dramatic representation. They, of course, merely laughed at the joke. Madame Bonaparte, however, took it more seriously, and betrayed symptoms of vexation. This was not the way to please Bonaparte. He took his glass in his hand, and looking towards his

wife, be bowed his head and said, "To the health of Madame la Comtesse d'Escarbagnas." The continuance of this pleasantry brought tears into Madame Bonaparte's eyes. Napoleon observed this, and he was, I believe, sorry for what he had said. To make amends, he again took up his glass, and winking at me, he said, "To the health of Madame la Marquise de Carabas." We all burst into a fit of laughter, in which Madame Bonaparte joined, but her heart was nevertheless full. The fact is, I was only sixteen and she was forty.

Thus far the affair did not much concern me; but now for the sequel. Among the comrades of Junot, and those who surrounded the first consul, there were many varieties of character. Courage was, to be sure, a virtue common to them all; but among these valiant sons of France there were many who were not gifted with much common-sense. One of these took it into his head to repeat the first consul's joke about the *Marquis de Carabas*. His folly might have reached the ears of Junot and have turned to something more serious than a joke. I wished to put a stop to it, and I consulted my mother as to what I should do. She gave me my instructions, and I returned to Malmaison, where we were then spending a few days. On the following day, Junot, who was then commandant of Paris, was prevented coming to dinner, but he came the day after. We were all on the bridge leading to the garden, and the first consul was sitting on the edge of the parapet. "My dear," said I to Junot, "the first time we go to *your country seat*, you must not forget one thing which is indispensably necessary in your retinue. If you neglect it, I will not go with you, and so I warn you. I am sure the general will say you ought to have it." "What is it?" inquired the first consul. "A *puss in boots* for a running footman." The whole party laughed immoderately; but I shall never forget the look of the first consul. He was a subject for a caricaturist. "I have preserved," continued I with great gravity, "a plaything which was given me when I was a little girl. You shall have it for a model."

There was a great deal of laughter, but the matter went no further that day. Some days afterwards we had assembled after dinner in the gallery next to the drawing-room, and the individual who had so frequently repeated Bonaparte's joke made the same allusion to the *marquisate.* I fixed my eye on the first consul; he turned towards his Sosia and said drily: "When you wish to imitate me, you should choose your subject better; methinks you might copy me in better things." In about a quarter of an hour after this rebuke he stepped up to me, and pinching my nose till he made me cry out, he said, "My dear, you are a clever girl; but you are very wicked. Correct this disposition. Remember that a woman ceases to charm whenever she makes herself feared." The result of all this was that I heard no more about the *marquisate.* My mother, who had certainly been more malicious in the affair than I had, inquired the particulars of the whole scene, and when I described it she laughed heartily and said, "I was sure that would do."

CHAPTER VI.

The Parliament of 1787—Disturbances at Rennes—M. de Nouainville—M. Necker—Project of M. de Loménie—His dismissal from the ministry—Burning of the effigy—Riots in Paris—Louis XVI., the queen, and the royal family.

AT the period when our family came to settle in Paris the popularity enjoyed by the parliament was immense, and it might have made use of that popularity for the benefit and happiness of all, had it given a right direction to public feeling. France, though she contained within herself all the elements of the commotions which were soon after developed, had not as yet unfurled the flag of revolution: her wounds were sufficiently manifest, and might easily have been healed by proper remedies. We then saw what we now see, and what will always be seen, viz. views of private interest succeeding patriotic professions. The desire of shining in a lengthened harangue, stuffed with scraps of erudition, was a universal mania; while some unfortunate little village, of which the orator was perhaps the mandatory, was left undefended and uneulogised. Such was the conduct of Desprémenil, who, after having had the courage to defeat the projects of the Archbishop of Toulouse, and shown himself in that affair a true tribune of the people, subsequently appeared in the character of an illuminato, or rather of a fool, in his reply to M. de Malesherbes, on the subject of the Protestants.

Desprémenil had procured, by dint of bribery, a proof sheet of the ministerial edicts. When he read them to the assembled chambers, the most profound indignation, and a thirst for vengeance, kindled up the fatal war between

the court and the parliament. Seeing its interests wounded on all sides, that body became an enemy, and a dangerous one. The rupture became every day more and more serious. The ministry, irritated at the surreptitious promulgation of their plans, ordered the arrest of Desprémenil in the most arbitrary manner. The parliament renewed its clamours: Paris was filled with murmurs, and a most ominous fermentation prevailed everywhere. At this juncture M. de Brienne, who neither knew how to yield with grace or to act with decision when the occasion required it, prorogued all the parliaments of the kingdom. This was a second appeal to insurrection, which indeed seemed too slow in its advances. My brother at that period went to join his regiment, which was then in garrison at Saint Brieux; but having many letters of recommendation at Rennes, he spent in that town all the time he had at his disposal, before he joined his comrades. Rennes was then in such a state of ferment and irritation as threatened an immediate explosion. The magistracy and noblesse had united to protest in anticipation against every infringement of their rights. The noblesse indeed were most violent: they declared that all who accepted any of the new posts were scoundrels, and they conveyed this protestation by deputies, who were arrested on their route by order of the ministry.

One morning my brother was awakened by a great tumult. He soon learned that Bertrand de Molleville, and the Count de Thiars,[1] were in the most imminent danger, in consequence of endeavouring to register the edicts. He immediately dressed himself, seized his sword and pistols, and ran to the barracks of the Rohan-Chabot regiment, which was then in garrison at Rennes. My brother had friends there, and naturally was anxious on their account, though he was aware of their honourable sentiments. The excitement was at its height when he arrived at the scene of action. The soldiers, irritated and insulted by the people, had lost all patience, and the business would in all probability have terminated in

[1] The former the intendant, the latter the commandant, of the province.

bloodshed, had not an individual, whose name is not sufficiently celebrated, that day immortalised himself by his admirable conduct. The people were proceeding to acts of violence; the soldiers only waited for the order to fire, when M. Blondel de Nouainville was commanded to execute the painful duty of directing an attack on the people. Throwing himself into the midst of the crowd, he exclaimed: "My friends, what is it you do? Do not sacrifice yourselves! Are we not all brothers? Soldiers, halt!" The troops and the people suspended their advance; at the same instant tranquillity was restored, and M. de Nouainville was carried about the town in triumph.

My father, whom confidential relations placed in communication with M. Necker, introduced my brother to him, in order that he might hear from his mouth the recital of the emeute at Rennes. My father was decidedly of opinion that, in a province like Brittany, such a proceeding was more likely to add fuel to the flame than to extinguish it. My brother was then twenty-two years of age, and his judgment ripened by much travelling, and a solid education directed by an able father, enabled him, in spite of his youth, not only to observe, but to draw useful inductions from his observations. M. Necker perceived this as he listened to his narrative, and he mentioned it to my father.

Alas! how desirable it would have been if M. Necker, who possessed a mind of such rectitude, had but listened to my father, and used his influence with the queen, who was all powerful, to arrest that fatal proceeding, which, as she said, would reduce Brittany to the condition of *a conquered province.* What torrents of French blood were shed in Brittany! and yet the Revolution had not then commenced; for many date that event from the taking of the Bastile. M. de Loménie's burlesque and tragi-comic ministry was still inundating us with its errors and its follies. Although the devotion of a true citizen had stopped the effusion of blood at Rennes, Grenoble was steeped in gore. An admirable address conveyed to the foot of the throne a statement of the grievances which pressed on the people of Dauphiny. For an answer it

received an insult, dictated to Louis XVI. by the delirium of an insane ministry. One false step was the parent of another, and error succeeded error without the means of providing a remedy. Finally, after trying over and over again the dangerous experiment of a *coup d'état*—after the patience of the nation was entirely exhausted, the archbishop made the fatal promise of assembling the States-General.[1]

The acts of men are only good and proper in relation to the time of their performance. Thus an appeal to the three bodies of the state, inviting them to rally round the throne, and to aid the sovereign in doing what was necessary to alleviate the people's misery, would have been a measure praiseworthy and useful at a period of ordinary misfortune; but at a time when animosity was excited to the highest pitch, it was at once tempting fate and defying the storm.

It is certain that the hopes of the Archbishop of Sens, in the distressing situation into which his imprudence and folly had thrown him, rested upon a fragile edifice of Machiavelian conception, which assuredly the wily Italian would never have avowed under similar circumstances. Monsieur de Loménie's project was to embroil the two privileged orders, and reconcile them again through the medium of the king and the third state, the object of this fine plan was to destroy the influence of the first two orders. This is actually true, improbable as it may appear. What infatuation! and it was to such a man that the destinies of a great people were, for fifteen months, entrusted! Truly it is difficult to determine which is most strange, his absurdity or the people's toleration of it!

But patience must have its term. The treasury was drained; famine and bankruptcy stared us in the face; all was ruin around us! The public indignation at length overwhelmed M. de Loménie, and he retired from the ministry, pursued by the execrations of all parties. On the day that terminated his administration, some young men prepared an effigy, the size of life, and dressed like the

[1] The king promised they should meet on the 1st of May 1789.

archbishop in a velvet coloured robe, in which three-fifths were composed of satin, and the two others of paper, by way of allusion to the decree of the 16th of August preceding. This effigy they burned with all due ceremony in the Place Dauphine, with every demonstration of extravagant exultation. There was at that time in Paris a Chevalier Dubois, who commanded the guard called the *guet*, or patrole. This *guet* was the gendarmerie of the time. The burning of the effigy displeased M. Dubois; and next day, when an attempt was made to renew the ceremony, he presented himself in person to forbid it. The young men desired him to go about his business; he refused, and some altercation arose. He then desired his troop to employ their arms, and they did so without mercy. At sight of the killed and wounded the people became furious; they attacked and drove away the *guet;* several guard-houses were forced and the arms seized. The riot continued to increase. It was now night. A detachment of the French guards, concealed under the arcade of Saint Jean, and in the Rue Martrois, fired on the crowd, and killed a great number. The dead bodies were thrown into the Seine, and tranquillity was for a time restored. But, on the resignation of the Keeper of the Seals, who was as much disliked as the Archbishop of Toulouse, the discontent of the people again broke out. Great rioting ensued in the streets of Paris, and numbers of people were killed by the military.

M. Necker was called to the head of the department of finance, and affairs took a favourable aspect. The finances of the country improved by confidence, the prisoners were released from the Bastile, and the parliament recalled. The double representation of the third state was the wish of every just and reasonable man. It was found necessary to adopt it; and on the 27th of December 1788, at a royal council at which the queen was present, it was determined to grant the double representation. This measure produced enthusiastic joy throughout all France, the demonstration of which was attended by considerable disturbance at Montmartre,

Rennes, and other towns in that part of the country. It seemed indeed as if the whole of France was included in the provinces of Dauphiny, Brittany, and the Franche-Comté. Hence it was that the people constantly insisted on the revival of their old rights and prerogatives; hence those perpetual contests between the states, the parliaments, and the king's council. For example, in Franche-Comté, thirty-two members of the noblesse protested against the decree of the majority of the states. The parliament cancelled the protest, and the king's council, in its turn, cancelled the decree of the parliament. The fact is, Louis XVI. might have been competent to govern in ordinary times; his virtues might have shed lustre over a peaceful throne; but the storm could only be allayed by a degree of courage and decision in which he was wanting. The king had near him a perfidious enemy in his privy council. The queen, too, exercised great influence over him, and was a most dangerous guide: she was passionate, full of prejudices, and ready to make any sacrifice to revenge herself when her private interests were wounded. But her misfortunes, and those of the king, must throw a veil over their faults.

As to the other members of the royal family, they were so divided that they could afford no rallying point. The king's aunts, one of whom had previously possessed great influence over the royal couple, had been superseded by other favourites. Madame Victoire had no power; and as to the pious Madame Elizabeth, she conceived she had no other duty to perform than to offer up prayers for the safety of those about her. Monsieur had set up a sort of opposition, which in France was infinitely more dangerous than it would have been in England, where it seems to be quite orthodox that the heir to the throne should head an opposition. Monsieur, however, did his brothers great injury without perhaps intending it,[1] and

[1] Among his most serious faults may be ranked the assumption of the title of regent in 1791. Louis XVI. felt this keenly, and immediately wrote to Vienna to Baron Breteuil, desiring him to disavow, not only to the Emperor of Austria, but to all the other Powers, the authorised existence of the regency. "This proceeding," said the unfortunate monarch in his letter,

the conduct of Madame was even more mischievous. As to the Count d'Artois, he might have been null though standing on the steps of the throne, had he not considered it a point of honour to disavow any other law than the old authority of the crown. Such was the situation of France and the royal family in 1789, just before the opening of the States-General.

"may be fatal to me, as it will only serve to irritate my people against me. I am master of my actions." The queen added a few lines to this letter. The Baron de Breteuil showed it to several individuals with whom I am acquainted; among others to the Abbé Junot and Cardinal Maury.

CHAPTER VII.

Opening of the States-General—Conversation between Bonaparte and Count Louis de Narbonne—Baron de Breteuil—The Queen and M. de Vergennes—Mirabeau—Advances made by the court—A bribe refused—The Queen's anger—Mirabeau solicits an interview with the Queen—Errors of M. Necker's administration.

ON the 5th of May 1789 the States-General were opened.[1] I was then too young to understand the solemnity of the spectacle presented by the states when they proceeded to the church of St. Louis at Versailles to hear mass on the day preceding their sitting; but I well recollect the immense and joyful crowd which thronged the three avenues, and lined the road along which the deputies passed. The states commenced their labours. Had union prevailed throughout all the parts of the great whole, that admirable work would have been brought to a favourable issue. Unfortunately, there was not only a want of union, but there was no wish to establish it. The third state grew tired of not being heard, or rather of receiving, by way of answer, demands made by the clergy and nobility, in a tone of authority ill suited to prevailing circumstances. At length came the separation of the third state from the two privileged orders: this was the finishing stroke; the grand contest between the throne and the nation was now about to be decided. The retreat of the third estate into the tennis court produced an effect which years would not have brought about. The deputies, by declaring themselves to be the

[1] It is a curious coincidence that Napoleon died at St. Helena on the 5th of May!

representatives of a great nation, acquired new power: the people began to measure their strength, and they found that they might venture very far in attempting the great work of their deliverance.

One of the causes which contributed to overthrow the throne of France, at this disastrous period, was occult government. Napoleon, when one day conversing about the revolution with Count Louis de Narbonne, said: "But you had great influence, had you not?" M. de Narbonne observed that nothing could be more unfounded than that supposition. His constitutional opinions withheld him alike from advocating or opposing the revolution. M. de Narbonne added that it was the queen herself who insisted on the double representation of the royal authority, though without any hostile feeling towards France, which she loved and regarded as her adopted country. Many absurdities have been advanced on this subject: for example, what could be more ridiculous than to suppose the queen to have been more attached to her brother than to her husband, her children, and her crown? "I believe, however," said M. de Narbonne, "that in 1792 the queen was so irritated by all she had suffered for three years previously, that her love for France was very much diminished." As to the occult government, the Baron de Breteuil is the individual who is most to be reproached on that score. While he declared it to be his wish to establish the English constitution in France, he would have introduced the constitution of Constantinople if there had been such a thing. That man did a great deal of mischief in France, with his loud voice and narrow ideas.

My mother described to me the enthusiastic admiration with which the queen was received on one occasion when she appeared at the opera soon after her marriage. The performance was *Iphigénie en Aulide.* The queen arrived very late, and the fine chorus *Chantons, célébrons notre reine,* had just been sung. As soon as the queen entered, the repetition of the chorus was unanimously called for, and it was sung by the whole audience with

such affectionate ardour that the queen melted into tears. Alas! unfortunate princess, how soon was this love changed to hatred! The following is one of the many circumstances which combined to effect that change. While M. de Vergennes was in the department of foreign affairs, he was one day summoned by the queen on some very singular business. The queen's brother, the Emperor, had requested her to obtain a loan of twelve millions for him. Of course, it was understood that the money was to be repaid, but, in the public ferment which then existed, it was necessary that both the loan and the repayment should be kept a profound secret. The matter was very difficult; for, on the queen's own acknowledgment, the king was decidedly opposed to it. The queen informed M. de Vergennes that she wished him to devise some means of raising the money, and above all of inducing the king to consent to it. "With all the respect I entertain for your majesty," replied the minister, "I am unfortunately obliged to disobey your commands. The state treasury is empty; we are approaching a terrible crisis, and I should consider myself very culpable were I, by my advice, to urge the king to a step which cannot but be fatal to your majesties and to France." "Sir," said the queen, haughtily, "I sent for you to request your intercession, not to ask for your advice. But I shall, without your aid, prevail on the king to do what will strengthen the links of friendship between France and Austria. I shall merely trouble you to procure the funds; and I will, if necessary, be the security. The queen of France may love her adopted country without forgetting that she is an Austrian archduchess. I want no new taxes. I do not even wish that the department of finance should be applied to in this affair; but a loan may be raised, and let it be done."

M. de Vergennes returned home much disconcerted. The queen's determination seemed to be positive, and the minister plainly saw that the king would yield to the entreaties of the woman he loved. That very evening the king sent for him, and informed him, with an em-

barrassed air, of the promise which the queen had extorted from him, and expressed his wish that the sum, or at least half of it, should be raised. It was not easy at that time to raise money for the government, and great address was requisite to attain that object. There was in Paris an immensely rich banker named Durhuet. He was commissioned by M. de Vergennes to raise the loan. After a great deal of trouble, and one or two journeys, he at length succeeded. The courier who was to convey to Vienna the intelligence that the king had given his consent to a loan of twelve millions, when France wanted bread, was ready to start. M. de Vergennes delivered to him his despatches with secret instructions. The courier set out; but when he had got about twenty leagues from Paris he was suddenly taken ill, and was obliged to suspend his journey for forty-eight hours. This interval was well employed by the minister. He threw himself at the king's feet, and so earnestly implored him to consider that the step he was about to take would be attended by fatal consequences, that Louis XVI. consented to the recall of the courier. The money was restored to M. Durhuet, and the king's refusal was sent to Vienna instead of the loan.

After the separation of the third state from the two privileged orders, but few means of reconciliation really remained, though at first there appeared many, and among them was the acquisition of Mirabeau. This astonishing man was without doubt the greatest political character of our revolution. His portrait has been drawn in every attitude, under all possible lights; and yet they have but little understood this wonderful orator, who think they have said enough when they echo the expressions, "What inimitable talent! he was surely inspired! but then the immorality of his writings!" and such like. I am indeed far from wishing to represent Mirabeau as an estimable character; but the brilliancy of that colossal talent with which nature had gifted him still remains to elicit admiration, and make us overlook, by the contrast, the shades which darken so splendid a picture. It would

be the height of absurdity in me to lay a tint upon the portrait of Mirabeau, which would in any degree diminish its truth to nature. I merely contend that, in speaking of him, we ought not to take for granted all the errors which have been laid to his charge. It matters little to us that the old magisterial peruke of the President Le Monier was compromised in the tribunals. What business have we with the matrimonial squabbles of M. and Mme. de Mirabeau?

I cannot class Mirabeau with the rest of the men who figured in the Revolution. I flatter myself I knew more of his real character than those who were acquainted with him at the epoch of his brilliant existence. The fact is, that I was in the habit of seeing regularly, almost every day, for at least seven years of my early life, the two individuals who were best able to give me an accurate opinion of Mirabeau. The first was his dearest friend, the man he cherished above all others, and who in return almost worshipped his memory. This man, who followed the political path of Mirabeau, and who by means of his intimacy with him, and subsequently with Dumouriez, obtained a sort of influence in the government, was Bonnecarère. He lived at Versailles at the time I resided there. The other individual was Cardinal Maury, who, when only an abbé, was the opponent of Mirabeau, by whom, however, he was constantly defeated. From the sentiments of these two men, and likewise from some documents which have been placed at my disposal, I have drawn my inferences. I have formed an opinion which is, I trust, divested of all prejudice. Excluded from the rank to which his birth entitled him, Mirabeau determined to recover it at any price. He vowed vengeance against his enemies, and with this bitterness of feeling did Mirabeau take his seat in the assembly of the States-General. As he entered the hall, on the day of opening, he cast a threatening glance on the ranks which he was not allowed to approach. A bitter smile played on his lips, which were habitually contracted by an ironical and scornful expression. He proceeded across the hall, and

seated himself upon those benches from which he was soon to hurl the thunderbolts which shook the throne.

A gentleman, strongly attached to the court, but likewise a friend of Mirabeau, the Count de Réb——l, who had observed the rancorous look which he darted around him when he took his seat, entered into conversation with him the same day, and pointed out to him that his peculiar position in the world closed against him the door of every saloon in Paris. "Consider," said the count, "that society when once wounded is not easily conciliated. If you wish to be pardoned you must ask pardon." Mirabeau listened with impatience to what the count said, but when he used the word "pardon" he could contain himself no longer, but started up and stamped with violence on the ground. His bushy hair seemed to stand on end, his little piercing eyes flashed fire, and his lips turned pale and quivered. This was always the way with Mirabeau when he was strongly excited. "I am come hither," cried he in a voice of thunder, "to be asked, not to ask for, pardon." These words were reported that very evening to the queen. Her majesty used to note in her memorandum book those deputies whose talents were worthy her notice. We may conclude that Mirabeau stood at the top of her red ink list.

That Mirabeau was corruptible, all the world knows. To manage a negotiation with him was, however, a difficult and delicate task. Nevertheless, intrigue and cunning afforded hopes of success at a moment when fears and misgivings were becoming more and more acute and deeply seated.

On the 7th of May 1789 the queen was informed of Mirabeau's hostile intentions.[1] M. Necker was consulted, and his opinion was that Mirabeau was possessed of extraordinary talent but wanted judgment; and M. Necker considered him not very formidable. But M. Necker ought to have known enough of our nation to be

[1] That is to say, that it was known *by his own avowal*, what he intended to do, and what he required for pursuing a directly contrary line of conduct. The documents relating to this affair *have been in my hands*, and are still in existence.

aware what might be produced by brilliant oratory and an eloquence teeming with facts. Now, the cause that Mirabeau had undertaken to defend was in itself the most just of all causes, and that M. Necker knew better than most people. He, however, declined to have anything to do with the negotiation, and merely yielded to the queen's wish to place at her disposal a sum of money to assist the execution of her designs.

Furnished with his instructions and a well stocked purse, the Count de Réb——l went one morning to Mirabeau, plied him with much art, and finally made him offers which he felt confident he would not hesitate to accept. But fate ordained that the man who had always been needy, and tormented by creditors, was at that moment well supplied with money. What was the result? He rejected the proposition of Count de Réb——l's offers, and asked him for whom he took him? Mirabeau dismissed the count with all the dignity of an ancient Greek, telling him that offers of money could not be listened to by him. The count, though chagrined at his disappointment, did not lose hope. He knew Mirabeau well enough, and was sure he would not remain long in his present frame of mind.

That same evening a man who served Mirabeau in the capacity of a *pacolet* called upon the count. This man, as Joulevet, was a kind of factotum to the tribune of the people. He had been implicated in the trial of Madame Lemonnier, and since that period had served, though distantly, his dangerous patron, whom he loved. He was a practised intriguer, and had been attracted to Paris by the assembling of the States-General, reasonably presuming that there his talents would find occupation. He waited on his old patron, and through the medium of M. de Bonnecarère, of whom I had these facts, was introduced to Mirabeau. Mirabeau found him of use; and obscure as this man was, he was of singular assistance to Mirabeau. Of this I have seen written proofs.

Joulevet opened the conference with the Count de Réb——l by announcing to him that Mirabeau consented

to place all his influence at the disposal of the court, but required, he said, an honourable treaty, and not a paltry bargain:[1] that he did not wish to supersede M. Necker, whose talents he respected (this by the way is not true, for Mirabeau made him the constant butt of his raillery[2]), but that any other department of the ministry would suit him. On these terms he would devote himself to the court. The Count de Réb——l, who was a good simple man, thought, on hearing this, that ambition had wrought this change in Mirabeau. He went to him, and was this time well received, and heard all the reasons he gave for his readiness to *sacrifice* himself by entering the ministry at such a moment. The same day the count saw the individual who was to speak to the queen, and he, on the first intelligence of the capitulation of Mirabeau (for he was really a stronghold), ran immediately to acquaint the queen with the happy news. The count followed, and when he entered the queen's cabinet, her majesty advanced towards him, her countenance beaming with pleasure. "The king will be gratified by your zeal, Monsieur," said she to the plenipotentiary. "Well, had you a good bargain of this man? How much has he cost?" The Count de Réb——l then said that Mirabeau, with true magnanimity, had rejected all propositions of a pecuniary nature. He then mentioned the appointment to the ministry.

At the mention of this the queen reddened and then turned deadly pale. She closed her eyes, and striking her forehead with her hand, exclaimed: "A minister! Make *Requetti Mirabeau* a minister! Never! never will I allow the threshold of the king's council to be sullied by the footsteps of such a man." She trembled with

[1] My memory is rather in doubt with regard to the amount of the sum stipulated. I think 100,000 fr.; but I am not certain. I have likewise forgotten whether or not this sum was part of the personal property of M. Necker. But M. Necker's honourable character would lead to that inference.

[2] Since writing the above I have seen a work of Madame de Staël, in which she states that Mirabeau had a high opinion of M. Necker. In this she is certainly deceived. I know that Mirabeau used among his intimate friends to call him a fool and a political Cassandra. Madame de Staël's conduct is very excusable; but her filial affection sometimes carries her too far.

rage. "Let him have money! Give him all he asks for! But to make him a minister!—Is it possible that my friends can give me this advice?" She then paced the room with every mark of violent agitation, repeating the words, "A minister, forsooth! a minister!" The sequel of the story is curious. The sum offered to Mirabeau might be regarded as considerable at a period when money, being distributed about in every direction, was not very abundant at Versailles. After Mirabeau had refused it three times, the queen desired the individual employed in the negotiation to return it. This individual departed for Germany, and after he was gone Mirabeau became pressed for money, and did not know how to raise it. He had missed the opportunity, and the channel of communication was gone. When that individual returned it was too late: Mirabeau was fairly in the list: he had thrown down the gauntlet, and now wanted both *money* and *office*. It is curious that Mirabeau earnestly solicited an interview with the queen. But the queen would consent to it only on condition that it should be in the presence of M. de Réb——l or Monsieur. Mirabeau, however, would not accede to that condition. What could be Mirabeau's object in so urgently pressing this interview? Did he not believe the truth of the story of the necklace? Did he found any hopes on the powers of captivation with which nature had endowed him, in spite of his personal disadvantages?

It is not surprising that Mirabeau should have maintained profound silence on the whole of this affair. It was a point of the utmost importance that members of the States-General should preserve, in the opinions of the citizens, a character for purity, independence, and disinterestedness. All and each of the deputies pledged themselves on their honour not to solicit or accept any pension or favour directly or indirectly. These considerations rendered Mirabeau circumspect, and whatever might be his habitual imprudence, he betrayed no levity in this affair, the details of which were not known till some years afterwards.

CHAPTER VIII.

Louis XVI. at the Hôtel de Ville on the 14th of July—Revolutionary scenes —Departure of my father and brother for England—My father's return —His duel with M. de Som——le—Return of my brother—Domiciliary visit to my father's house—Napoleon's remarks upon it—The 10th of August—We save two of our friends—M. de Condorcet—My father denounced—Departure of my father and mother from Paris—My sister and I placed at a boarding-school.

WHEN, after the 14th of July, the king was conducted to the Hôtel de Ville to sanction the revolution which had been made against himself, my father informed me that his deep distress and calm dignified deportment inspired respect from all who surrounded him. The king had long seen the storm gathering in the horizon; it had now burst upon his head. The danger was present and full before him. My father said that the pious expression of the king's countenance showed how he viewed his situation. He judged it as a Christian if he did not judge it as a king. Before the Revolution of the 14th of July M. Necker had been dismissed. He was recalled after that event. From this indecision it was clear that the ship had no pilot. At this period a report which had long been circulated assumed a semblance of truth. The Duke of Orleans had been accused of being the head of a party, and the newspapers of the day employed his name in the hints which they daily set forth that France should follow the example of England. The Duke of Orleans was fixed upon, because, in the English Revolution, the direct part of the royal family had been expelled in favour of the Prince of Orange. The thing was so often repeated

that the Duke of Orleans began at last to believe that he might place himself at the head of a party and become the leader of a faction without the qualification for such an office.

Robespierre and others set the Duke of Orleans forward, because they wanted something that would please the moderate and reasonable party. That party allowed itself to be caught in the snare. But this stone, which it was intended to hurl on the royal head, could not roll of itself. It was only dangerous from the hands which were to move it. I recollect, as though they were terrible dreams, the 14th of July, the 6th of October, the 21st of June, and several other days which formed the most fatal in the calendar. On the 6th of October, in particular, I remember seeing my mother, at three in the afternoon, ordering the servants to shut the drawing-room shutters which looked on the quay. My father wished to go to Versailles; but she wept and held him by the arm, entreating him not to leave us. My father, alarmed at the aspect of affairs, which was every day becoming more threatening, converted his property into English stock, and set off with my brother to London. There he remained for some weeks, and then returned to France, leaving my brother in England to await his further instructions.

Many events occurred in our family during the absence of my brother. My father's constitutional principles were well known, and yet his attachment to the king led him into several disputes. He fought a duel with M. de Som——le, an officer in my brother's regiment, who, in my father's presence, made some remarks on the opinions of Albert. M. de Som——le was slightly wounded in the arm, but my father escaped unhurt.

At that period a family who kept many servants could not be sure of them all. My father took all possible precautions. The duel was not known, it is true; but the quarrel which gave rise to it was repeated about with various commentaries. This was attended by dan-

gerous consequences. In the preceding year a man, who said he was an upholsterer, established himself in a little shop in the neighbourhood of the Mint. He came to request my mother's custom; but he was informed that she had already an upholsterer whom she was not inclined to discard for a stranger. He was insolent, and a dispute arose between him and the servant. The noise drew my father to the door, and the result was that M. Thirion was turned out of the house. My father and the rest of the family thought no more about this affair, but Thirion remembered it, and he vowed deadly hatred against us.

The sections were formed. This man acquired some influence in ours. He became secretary, clerk, or I know not what. A few days after my father's return from England a domiciliary visit was made to our house. It was under the direction of Thirion, who had probably instigated it. My father had just risen and was shaving, when, to his surprise, Thirion entered his dressing-room and informed him that he had come to inquire his age, his qualifications, and the object of his recent journey. My father insisted on seeing the order, and Thirion refused to show it. My father flew into a violent rage, and seizing on a large stick, would probably have insisted on inflicting a severe chastisement on Thirion but for my mother's intercession; Thirion took his departure, after declaring that he should make a report against my father. In the midst of the agitation into which this scene threw my mother and me, Napoleon Bonaparte happened to call. On being informed of what had taken place he expressed great indignation, and immediately repaired to the section, the club, the committee, or whatever might be the authority which at that time ordered domiciliary visits. Thirion had already made his report; but Napoleon, nevertheless, animadverted strongly on Thirion's refusal to produce his order. "If," said he, "M. de Permon had fired a pistol at that man, he would only have been defending his house against an insolent intruder, and no one could have blamed him."

This happened on the 7th or 8th of August. The 10th was a day which I shall never forget. It was the day of my *fête*, and hitherto I had always spent it happily. Some of my young friends had been invited to visit me, and my little chamber was filled with flowers, toys, and sweetmeats. But our festival day proved a day of mourning. In the streets the cries of the people mingled with the thundering of artillery and the groans of the wounded. About noon my brother entered with one of his companions-in-arms, who was wrapped in a greatcoat. The young man had tasted nothing for forty hours, and he had just escaped from the pursuit of those who would have massacred him if they had found him. His family lay under great obligations to the queen. His duty and his opinions happened to coincide. In the course of a few days he had fought three duels, two of which had terminated fatally. One of his deceased adversaries was a relation of Manuel; consequently there was everything to fear. The young gentleman was concealed in my little apartment, and I received instructions as to the answers I should give in case of the house being searched. The cautious prudence I had then to observe in behalf of a stranger afterwards became useful to me when those I most dearly loved were in similar danger.

My father was out, and my mother had anxiously expected his return for several hours. My brother went frequently to the gate to look for him. He even ventured as far as the quay, where he heard of the deposition of the king, but could see nothing of my father. The storm seemed to be subsiding, but the firing of musketry was still heard at intervals. Night was drawing in, and my father had not yet returned. My brother again went down to the gate to look for him, and he saw a man quickly turn round the corner of our hotel. He immediately recognised the figure of my father. He called to him, and my father advanced, looking cautiously behind him. He desired my brother to leave the door open, observing that he was merely going round the corner to

fetch a person who was in the arcade of the Mint. He returned, bringing with him a gentleman who was scarcely able to walk. He was leaning on the arm of my father, who conducted him silently to a bedchamber. Alas! when the wounded man threw off the large military cloak which enveloped him, what was our distress to recognise M. de Bevy! He was pale and faint, and the blood was flowing copiously from his wounds. Tranquillity was not restored during the whole of the night. Owing to the situation of our house we were in greater safety than many of our neighbours, for we were less in sight, and more out of hearing of the threats and imprecations uttered by the crowds who paraded Paris during the whole of the night.

On the morning of the 11th a message was sent by the valet-de-chambre of my brother's young friend, informing him that he was in great danger, as Manuel was making strict search for him. A strange idea then occurred to my brother, though in its result it proved very fortunate. M. de Condorcet lodged at that time in an *entresol* in the Mint. My brother had occasion to see him several times, and he had always treated him in a very friendly way. My brother went to him. I do not know what passed in the interview; but Albert's friend was saved.

My father entertained no fears for his own safety. He was engaged in writing a letter for M. de Bevy, when our butcher, an honest worthy man, who was a lieutenant or captain in the National Guards, sent to inform us that my father had been denounced for having harboured enemies of the people. My father paid little attention to this warning; but in about an hour afterwards he received more positive information that he would be arrested that very night. The individual who brought him this information added to it the promise of a passport for one of the cities in the south of France, and undertook to conduct my father, accompanied by my mother,—but my mother only, out of Paris. She was almost distracted at the

thought of leaving her children behind her at such a moment; but there was no alternative.

After long deliberation as to what would be the best way of disposing of myself and my sister, it was determined that we should be placed at a boarding-school, and that my brother should have a lodging near us. This plan was no sooner resolved than executed, and before night my sister and I were installed in a boarding-school in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, kept by Mesdemoiselles Chevalier.

CHAPTER IX.

Murder of Madame de Lamballe—Our removal to Toulouse—My father summoned before the section—My mother's letter to Salicetti—He makes my brother his secretary—Death of the king and Madame Elizabeth—My father's illness—Friendly warning of Couder—Our journey to the waters of Cauterets—Death of Robespierre.

My sister and I were miserable during the time we remained at the boarding-school. Our only intervals of happiness were when my brother came to see us, which he did as often as he could. One day, when my brother came to pay us a visit, he perceived as he came along groups of individuals whose sanguinary drunkenness was horrible. Many were naked to the waist, and their arms and breasts were covered with blood. They bore tattered garments upon their pikes and swords. Their countenances were inflamed, and their eyes haggard; in short, their appearance was hideous. These groups became more frequent and more numerous. My brother, in his uneasiness about us, determined to come to us at all risks, and drove rapidly along the Boulevard until he arrived opposite the house of Beaumarchais. There he was stopped by an immense mob, composed also of half-naked individuals besmeared with blood, and who had the appearance of demons incarnate. They vociferated, sang, and danced. It was the Saturnalia of Hell! On perceiving Albert's cabriolet they cried out, "Let it be taken to him! Let it be taken to him! He is an aristocrat!" In a moment the cabriolet was surrounded by the multitude, and from the middle of the crowd an object seemed to arise and approach. My brother's troubled sight did not

enable him at first to perceive long auburn tresses clotted with blood, and a countenance still lovely. The object came nearer and nearer, and rested upon his face. My unhappy brother uttered a piercing cry. He had recognised the head of Madame de Lamballe![1]

We received a letter from my mother, dated Toulouse. She and my father had fixed their temporary abode in that city, and they desired us to join them. We accordingly left Paris for that purpose. We lodged in the house of M. de Montauriol, president of the parliament of Toulouse. It was situated in the finest part of the town, and was divided between four families. We were no sooner established in our new abode than my father was summoned to appear before the president of the section or district. My father was in such a state of irritability that my mother would not suffer him to go, and my brother went in his stead.

It was some time before my brother could make the worthy magistrate comprehend that the citizen Permon he saw before him was not citizen Permon *the elder*, and that the latter was too ill to attend. When at length this was explained to him, after considerable difficulty, he ex-

[1] During the horrible massacres of September 1792 the Princess of Lamballe was seized and carried, in the first instance, to the prison of La Force. She was afterwards removed to the Abbey, to be questioned before two ferocious men of the name of Hebert and L'Hullier, appointed to sit as judges. The following is the whole of her trial: *Question.* Who are you?—*Answer.* Maria Louisa, Princess of Savoy. *Q.* Your quality?—*A.* Superintendent of the queen's household. *Q.* Had you any knowledge of the plots of the court on the 10th of August?—*A.* I do not know that there were any plots on the 10th of August; but this I know, that I had no knowledge of them. *Q.* Will you swear to liberty, equality, and a detestation of the king, the queen, and royalty?—*A.* I shall readily swear to the two first, but I cannot swear to the last, as I have no such sentiment in my heart. A bystander whispered, "*If you do not swear, you are a dead woman.*" She was lead into a court of the prison already strewed with dead bodies, where, on receiving the blow of a dagger, she fell, fainting with the loss of blood; and soon afterwards her body was pierced with a lance, and her noble spirit fled. We dare not relate all the horrors and indignities that were heaped on her. Her head was cut off, and carried through Paris to the Palais Royal, and exposed beneath the window of the Duke of Orleans, who gazed on it for a while without uttering a syllable. He was charged with being privy to this murder by the double thirst of revenge and interest; for, by her death, he gained her jointure of a hundred thousand crowns, which she received out of the fortune of the Duchess of Orleans, who was her sister-in-law.

claimed, "And what do you do here? coward! aristocrat! why are you not with the army?" My brother replied that he was not with the army because, his father being ill, his mother and sisters required his protection. However, this explanation was not considered satisfactory, and my brother narrowly escaped being arrested on the spot. When he returned home he was in great distress and alarm. He consulted my mother on the means of securing my father's safety; and she, with the admirable spirit and presence of mind which never forsook her, determined to write to her countryman Salicetti, who was then in Paris awaiting the king's trial.

My father had been intimately acquainted with M. Durosoi, who edited a journal entitled *l'Ami du Roi.*[1] M. Durosoi, who was firmly wedded to his own opinions, happened to meet Salicetti one day in my father's house, and a warm discussion arose between them; my father supporting the arguments of Durosoi, and my mother those of Salicetti. The latter left the house much out of humour, and the course of events obliged my mother and father to quit Paris before they had an opportunity of seeing him again. My mother feared that he might bear in mind the part my father had taken in the discussion above mentioned; and this fear was not so unfounded as it may appear. My father's opinions might be expected to influence his conduct as well as his language; and this reflection would naturally occur to the man who was asked to be a sort of security for him. My mother felt this difficulty, but she nevertheless determined to write. The letter was that of a wife and a mother. She appealed to his past friendship, to the remembrance of their common country; and concluded by assuring Salicetti that she

[1] *L'Ami du Roi* (the King's Friend) was written by Counsellor Montjoie, the author of a valuable history of the Revolution. The unfortunate M. de Rosoi was the editor of the *Gazette de Paris*. These writers, and many others, who were ardent in the cause of royalty, and editors of papers, were all imprisoned, the papers were suppressed, and the printing presses destroyed. It was on the 25th of August 1792 that M. de Rosoi was ordered for execution. Many very interesting particulars preceding the death of this able and zealous royalist are to be found in the narrative written by Captain St. Meard.

should owe to him the lives of her husband and her children.

The danger was no doubt great, but perhaps not so great as my mother's fears led her to imagine, at least as far as regarded my father. My brother was really in much greater danger; for he was required to join the army, and to do that would have been to march to certain death, for the fatigues he had already undergone had brought on a pulmonary inflammation. By the next courier, Salicetti returned an exceedingly kind answer to my mother's letter. After thanking her for giving him an opportunity to serve her, he informed her that he had placed her husband under the immediate protection of the authorities of Toulouse. As to my brother, he appointed him his secretary, and sent him his nomination, together with leave to spend three months with his family.

My brother accepted the offer of Salicetti, though without the knowledge of my father, whose feelings were at that time so deeply wounded that we did not think it advisable to add to his distress by requiring him to consent to such a step. In a very grateful letter, my brother informed Salicetti that he should join him in the month of March following. He was then twenty-four years of age.

Meanwhile the king's fate was decided. This was a severe stroke to my poor father, who was greatly attached to his sovereign. American liberalism had had an influence upon him as well as upon all who had served in the American war; his opinions were fixed, and he was never happier than on the day when the king accepted the constitution. On this point my father's opinions coincided with those of the great majority of the nation; and while the illusion lasted, that we had or could have a constitutional sovereign, joy and satisfaction predominated. When the fate of the king was made known in the provinces, the grief it excited was sincere and profound, for, as a man, Louis the Sixteenth was universally beloved. My father owed much to the king, and much also to Madame Elizabeth. He trembled for his benefactress, and the

blow he had already received became mortal, when he saw the death of Madame Elizabeth announced in the journals. He had already been partially confined to his chamber; but he now shut himself up entirely, and kept his bed for whole days together.

We had brought with us from Paris only one servant, my father's valet-de-chambre. My mother was therefore obliged to hire domestics at Toulouse. These servants gossiped to their acquaintances about my father, and the most ridiculous stories, respecting the cause of his supposed disappearance, were soon circulated about the town.

There was a shoemaker, named Couder, who exercised great influence in the commune. This man, whose name I never utter without gratitude, warned my mother of the reports which were circulated respecting my father. He was to be summoned and interrogated, and in that case he would have been ruined. We had then a representative of the people who certainly would not have tolerated my father's answers. At that time my brother was with Salicetti. My mother wrote to him, and the next post brought back a letter in Salicetti's own handwriting, containing testimonials in favour of my father, and recommending him to his colleague.[1] Couder was a very honest man. His opinions were those of a staunch and sincere republican. His merit was, therefore, the greater in what he did for us, for he was perfectly aware of my father's sentiments. "All I want," said he to my mother, "is your promise that you will not emigrate. When I see the French going abroad they appear to me like children abandoning their parents."

My mother had for two years been suffering from a complaint of the chest. She was recommended to try the waters of Cauterets, and she set off, taking me and my sister with her. My father could not accompany

[1] This colleague was Mallarmé. He at that time lived with a beautiful female of Toulouse known by the name of Madame MacMahon. One evening she appeared at the theatre in an elegant red cap of liberty, gracefully placed on one side of her head. She is now Madame D——.

us: indeed, he remained behind almost as a hostage. On our return from Cauterets we found him still very ill. Public affairs maintained a gloomy and threatening aspect. Robespierre had perished; but the revolutionary executions still continued. Terror was not yet sufficiently abated to admit of a free expression of the joy which the intelligence of his death excited in the provinces.

CHAPTER X.

Arrest of Bonaparte—His conduct in Corsica—Jacobin club—Bonaparte disguised as a sailor—Bonaparte, Junot, and Robespierre the younger—Friendship between Bonaparte and Junot—Rivalry of Bonaparte and Salicetti—Examination of Bonaparte's papers—Erasure of his name from the list of generals.

AFTER our return to Toulouse my mother received letters from my brother which much distressed her. They informed her of the arrest of General Bonaparte, and the circumstances which had caused that measure. Albert was very indignant. He thought Salicetti's conduct in that affair was not what it ought to have been to a countryman and an old friend. My mother wrote to Salicetti, expressing the pain she felt on hearing of Bonaparte's arrest. "Do not," she said, "let his mother add this new affliction to those with which she is already burthened."

My brother delivered this letter to Salicetti, and in his mother's name implored a favourable answer. After having read it, Salicetti said to my brother: "Inform Madame Permon that I am sorry I cannot do what she wishes for General Bonaparte. But you must see yourself that the thing is impossible. The intelligence which I have received from Corsica would dictate the step I have taken, even if the affairs of Genoa did not render it indispensable. Are you not of my opinion, Permon?" My brother could not answer *yes*, for he was not of Salicetti's opinion. Bonaparte was accused of being a spy, and my brother did not think him guilty. Besides,

he thought that at all events it did not become Salicetti to accuse him of Jacobinism.. He therefore remained silent.

On the subject of the affairs of Corsica, about which so much was said by Salicetti and Albitte, I have recently been furnished with some details by an eye-witness perfectly competent by his intelligence and information to observe all that was passing. These details are as follows:

In the spring of 1793, Bonaparte, before he went to Toulon, having obtained leave of absence, made a visit to Corsica. After his arrival at Ajaccio he lodged near the seaport in the house of an old lady, the Countess Rossi, a friend of his family. A club was formed in a barrack situated without the city, in what is called the Sea-square. In this club several orators distinguished themselves, and Napoleon Bonaparte was a frequent speaker.

Some of the inhabitants at Ajaccio, alarmed at the formidable aspect of this club, established another assembly which was attended by several persons of my acquaintance; among others by a naval officer, whose ship was lying in the roads of Corsica, and who by his talent and courage was very capable of counteracting the measures of the first-mentioned club, should they have become dangerous. This assembly was held in a large house on the opposite side of the square. Its object was to maintain tranquillity and prevent disorder. The club, of which Bonaparte was a member, at length became so threatening to the public tranquillity, that the moderate assembly resolved to send a deputation to it to point out the mischief it was likely to occasion to the country.

The naval officer to whom I have above alluded was at the head of this deputation, which consisted of himself and three other members of the assembly. They advised the club to be peaceable, above all, to wait for the decision of France, and to follow the movement of the republican government. Bonaparte immediately mounted the tribune, and delivered a vehement speech, the object of which was to show that in times of revolution people must be either friends or enemies, that Solon punished

with death every man who remained neutral in civil discord, and that the moderates ought, therefore, to be considered enemies by true patriots. When the sitting was at an end Napoleon went out into the square. He was very much heated, and seemed but little disposed to any thing conciliating. However, his violence did not intimidate my friend who was at the head of the deputation. He reproached him for what he had said in the tribune. "Bah," said Bonaparte, "a mere club speech, nothing else. But, my friend, do you not see the necessity of firmness, and of choosing a wide road instead of a narrow path?" "You," replied my friend, "will perhaps lose yourself in the road you have chosen; and in the name of friendship I conjure you to alter your course." Bonaparte frowned, turned on his heel, and went off to join some of his turbulent colleagues.

Some days afterwards my friend learned from some of his correspondents in the interior of the island that four thousand peasants intended to make a descent from the mountains, and that their hostility would be particularly directed against the families of Salicetti and Bonaparte. My friend warned Bonaparte of the danger. Napoleon wished to know whence my friend had obtained the information. He was exceedingly angry because my friend would not tell him. At length he said, "No matter, I fear no one." He parted from him very coolly. Early next morning my friend's gondolier came to inform him that he had just seen Bonaparte in the disguise of a sailor stepping into a gondola for the purpose of proceeding to Calvi. My friend immediately went out to ascertain the truth of this statement, which was corroborated by all the sailors of the port. On inquiring what had become of the Bonaparte family, he was informed they had taken refuge at Cargesa.

At the time when these circumstances occurred, Bonaparte had just received his commission of captain of artillery. Shortly after he was sent to Toulon to command the works of the siege. About this period of his life Bonaparte was very intimate with Robespierre the

younger, with whom Junot was also well acquainted. Young Robespierre was what might be called an agreeable young man, animated by no bad sentiments, and believing, or feigning to believe, that his brother was led on by a parcel of wretches, every one of whom he would banish to Cayenne if he were in his place. On his arrival at Toulon, Bonaparte had the reputation of being a warm patriot. Junot has frequently told me that the general-in-chief, who was very moderate, at first entertained a sort of prejudice against the young officer, whose opinions he seemed to regard as much too violent.

The mission given to Bonaparte by the representative Ricord, on the 25th Messidor, year II., was rather diplomatic than military. In short, it was an order for supervision and inquisition. He was especially instructed to keep a watchful eye upon the French minister and chargé-d'affaires at Genoa. It is therefore evident that he enjoyed the full confidence of the proconsuls, who then had the control of everything, and this confidence could only have resulted from the knowledge of his opinions and sentiments. Bonaparte was then only five-and-twenty years of age. Ricord must therefore have been very sure of him. Salicetti succeeded Ricord, and it was naturally to be expected that Bonaparte would enjoy the protection of the new representative. They were countrymen, and even friends, in spite of the difference of their age; and though Salicetti came in immediately after a reaction, it is very certain that he entertained what was called *terrorist* opinions.

When Bonaparte was arrested, Junot, who loved him affectionately, determined to save him either by artifice or force. The punishments of the reign of terror were not yet at an end, and an individual who was the object of any accusation whatever was in great danger. Bonaparte, however, forbade Junot to resort to any violence. "I am innocent," said he, "and I will trust to the laws." The following is a letter which Bonaparte wrote from his prison to Junot:—

"I see a strong proof of your friendship, my dear Junot, in the proposition you make to me, and I trust you feel convinced that the friendly sentiments that I have long entertained for you remain unabated. Men may be unjust towards me, my dear Junot, but it is enough for me to know that I am innocent. My conscience is the tribunal before which I try my conduct. That conscience is calm when I question it. Do not, therefore stir in this business. You will only compromise me. Adieu, my dear Junot.—Yours,

"BONAPARTE."

This letter was an answer to one which Junot had sent him by a soldier, within the first twenty-four hours after his arrest, when he was not permitted to see him. I do not know why Junot was refused admittance to him, but I think it was because orders had been given to keep Bonaparte in solitary confinement. Junot, in his letter, proposed to aid him in effecting his escape, and suggested some plans which could only have entered the head of an enthusiastic young man like himself.[1] He declared his determination to share his imprisonment, even if it were doomed to be eternal.

One motive, I do not mean to say the only one, of the animosity shown by Salicetti to Bonaparte, in the affair of Loano, was, that they were at one time suitors to the same lady. I am not sure whether it was in Corsica or in Paris, but I know for a fact that Bonaparte, in spite of his youth, or perhaps I should rather say on account of his youth, was the favoured lover. It was the opinion of my brother, who, as I have already mentioned, was secretary to Salicetti, that Bonaparte owed his life to a circumstance which is not very well known. The fact is, that Salicetti received a letter from Bonaparte, the contents of which appeared to make a deep impression on him. Bonaparte's papers had been delivered into Salicetti's hands, who, after an attentive perusal of them, [illegible] them

[1] Madame Mère, the mother of Bonaparte, always entertained a grateful recollection of Junot's conduct at this period.

aside with evident dissatisfaction. He then took them up again, and read them a second time. Salicetti declined my brother's assistance in the examination of the papers, and after a second examination, which was probably as unsatisfactory as the first, he seated himself with a very abstracted air. It would appear that he had seen among the papers some document which concerned himself. Another curious fact is, that the man who had the care of the papers after they were sealed up was an inferior clerk entirely under the control of Salicetti; and my brother, whose business it was to have charge of the papers, was directed not to touch them. He has often spoken to me of this circumstance, and I mention it here as one of importance to the history of the time. Nothing that relates to a man like Napoleon can be considered useless or trivial.

What, after all, was the result of this strange business which might have cost Bonaparte his head?—for, had he been taken to Paris and tried by the Committee of Public Safety, there is little doubt that the friend of Robespierre the younger would have been condemned by Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois. The result was the acquittal of the accused. This result is the more extraordinary, since it would appear that at that time Salicetti stood in fear of the young general. A compliment is even paid to Bonaparte in the decree, by which he was provisionally restored to liberty. That liberation was said to be granted on the consideration that General Bonaparte might be useful to the Republic. This was foresight; but subsequently, when measures were taken which rendered Bonaparte no longer an object of fear, his name was erased from the list of general officers, and it is a curious fact that Cambacérès, who was destined to be his colleague in the consulate, was one of the persons who signed the act of erasure.

Bonaparte, who was then very unfortunately situated, came to Paris to obtain justice, or to endeavour to put into execution some of the thousand projects, which, as he used to tell us, he formed every night when he lay

down to rest. He had with him only one aide-de-camp—one friend, whom his adverse fortune attached the more strongly to him. This was Junot, who from that moment gave him abundant proofs of the sincere friendship which never terminated but with his life. Duroc was not connected with Bonaparte until the latter took the command of the army of Italy. It has been frequently asserted that that they were acquainted at Toulon, but this is a mistake. Bourrienne, who is well instructed in all these details, relates these facts in their true light. Salicetti and Bonaparte were not good friends, for the former feared his young compatriot, and they were never in each other's confidence.

The opinion of Bonaparte, after he became consul, respecting the men of the Revolution, is well known. He employed in the first offices statesmen who had taken part in the Revolution; but, with the exception of Fouché, whom he never liked,[1] these were not the individuals who made the most distinguished figure in the revolutionary history. It may be remembered that on the occasion of the Infernal Machine, he made a furious attack, in the Council of State, on those whom he denominated the men of blood—the men of September. "France," said he, "will never be happy until they are driven away. It is they who do all the mischief!"

[1] It is certain that Bonaparte was never partial to Fouché. He employed him, it is true, but it seemed to be in spite of an instinctive conviction which assured him that Fouché was one of those who would contribute to his downfall.

CHAPTER XI.

M. Brunetière—Curious mode of correspondence—My mother's visit to Paris —The Hotel de la Tranquillité—Bonaparte's visit to us—Paris after the 9th Thermidor—Bonaparte and the Muscadins—Scarcity of bread—The sections declaiming against the Convention—Politics banished from conversation—Salicetti's boots.

MY father had an old friend, an advocate, named Brunetière, who maintained communications with the powerful men of the day, and who informed him of all that was going on in Paris, at least as far as he could do so with safety. We were not then in the height of the reign of terror; but there was reason to fear that the revolutionary flame might be rekindled, and caution was advisable. It was no unusual thing to send letters concealed in pies, and in this manner questions and answers travelled under the protection of gastronomic dainties. News was frequently sent from Paris to the country in the lining of a coat, the crown of a hat, or a box of artificial flowers. It was customary to send with these packets a letter, saying, "In compliance with your request, I send you such or such a thing." My mother was sometimes very reluctant to pull to pieces the beautiful articles of millinery which came from Paris in this way. I recollect she once wore a hat in which a letter was concealed a whole fortnight, without telling my father where it came from, because she knew he would have had it pulled to pieces without mercy. It was to be sure at a moment when very interesting news was likely to be communicated.

At length affairs assumed a more serene aspect, and

my father received repeated invitations to proceed to Paris. My mother, finding that she could not prevail on him to go, determined herself to set out for Paris, and take me along with her; and it was agreed that my father should repair to Bordeaux, where he had some business to settle, and remain there during my mother's absence. On her arrival in the capital my mother was to ascertain whether it would be safe for my father to join her, and to determine on his future plans. On our arrival in Paris we alighted at the Hotel de la Tranquillité, in the Rue des Filles Saint Thomas. We were lodged in a very good suite of apartments on the second floor, overlooking a garden. My mother had only two servants with her, a femme-de-chambre and a valet. My brother had returned to Paris in company with Salicetti, but he was no longer in his employment: he had given up the situation of secretary two months before. His intention was to go to Holland, and to enter into trade. A day or two after our arrival my mother received visits from some of her friends who had escaped the terrorist proscription, and who felt as if they were restored to a new life. Among the number was M. de Perigord, who owed his miraculous preservation to his valet-de-chambre, Beaulieu. Before the Revolution my mother had been acquainted with many Corsicans; though their opinions did not coincide with her own they nevertheless were frequent visitors at her house. As soon as they knew she had returned they all flocked to see her. Among them were Moltedo, the Abbé Arrighi, Aréna, Malicetti, Chiappe, and above all, Bonaparte. My brother Albert had informed him of my mother's arrival, and he came immediately to see us.

I may say that it was then I first knew Bonaparte. Previously I had only a confused recollection of him. When he came to see us after our return to Paris his appearance made an impression upon me which I shall never forget. At that period of his life Bonaparte was decidedly ugly; he afterwards underwent a total change. I do not speak of the illusive charm which his glory spread around him, but I mean to say that a gradual physical

change took place in him in the space of seven years. His emaciated thinness was converted into a fulness of face, and his complexion, which had been yellow and apparently unhealthy, became clear and comparatively fresh; his features, which were angular and sharp, became round and filled out. As to his smile, it was always agreeable. The mode of dressing his hair, which has such a droll appearance as we see it in the prints of the passage of the bridge of Arcola, was then comparatively simple; for young men of fashion (the *muscadins*), whom he used to rail at so loudly at that time, wore their hair very long. But he was very careless of his personal appearance; and his hair, which was ill combed and ill powdered, give him the look of a sloven. His little hands, too, underwent a great metamorphosis: when I first saw him they were thin, long, and dark; but he was subsequently vain of the beauty of them, and with good reason. In short, when I recollect Napoleon entering the courtyard of the Hotel de la Tranquillité in 1793, with a shabby round hat drawn over his forehead, and his ill-powdered hair hanging over the collar of his gray greatcoat, which afterwards became as celebrated as the white plume of Henry IV., without gloves, because he used to say they were a useless luxury, with boots ill made and ill blackened, with his thinness and his sallow complexion; in fine, when I recollect him at that time, and think what he was afterwards, I do not see the same man in the two pictures.

My mother, who was the best-hearted and most natural of women, frankly expressed all the pleasure she felt at seeing him again. She spoke to him of Salicetti, whom, she said, she had blamed for his treatment of him. A smile passed rapidly over the lips of Bonaparte. "He wished," said he, "to ruin me, but *my star* prevented him. However, I must not boast of my star, for who knows what may be my fate." I never shall forget the expression of his countenance as he uttered these last words. My mother endeavoured to soothe him, and she succeeded better than I could have imagined. I confess that I was much surprised when I saw Salicetti and Bonaparte come

next day to dine with us, to all appearance very good friends.

At this period Paris was in a most disturbed state. Tragical scenes daily arose in the bosom of the Convention, and disgraced its national majesty. The accomplices of Robespierre, alarmed at the death of Danton, had overthrown the Dictator to save themselves. They knew not what to do, for they could no longer keep up the mask they had borrowed to effect the Thermidorian revolution.

Immediately after the 9th Thermidor the members of the Committee of Public Safety were accused. It was, I think, Legendre who attacked Collot-d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, Barrère, Amar-Vouland, and David. This attack took place about the 10th Fructidor. Carrier was also brought to the Convention, but it was to be condemned. He perished on the 26th Frimaire following, and it must be confessed that his last moments were certainly marked by courage. It is true that courage may be an attendant on crime as well as on virtue.

It was in the midst of these circumstances that we arrived in Paris. On the day of our arrival M. Brunetière told us he was very sorry that he had advised us to come. Bonaparte confirmed his apprehension. He had just then received a letter from his mother, in which she observed that the reaction would probably deluge the south of France in blood.

"It is those royalist coxcombs," said Napoleon, "who are making all this uproar. They would be very glad to glean after the battle of the patriots. What fools there are in that Convention! I am very glad to see that Permon has not adopted the ridiculous fashion of these young men. They are all worthless Frenchmen." Those to whom Bonaparte alluded wore gray greatcoats with black collars and green cravats. Their hair, instead of being *à la Titus*, which was the prevailing fashion of the day, was powdered, plaited, and turned up with a comb, while on each side of the face hung two long curls called dogs-ears (*oreilles de chien*). As these young men were very frequently attacked, they carried about with them

large sticks, which were not always merely weapons of defence; for the frays which arose in Paris at that time were often provoked by them.

The scarcity of bread and the necessaries of life now began to be sensibly felt. My sister secretly sent us flour from the south. In so doing she was obliged to resort to various subterfuges, for a serious punishment would have been the result of the discovery. The people who had endured misery under Robespierre, because Robespierre flattered them, now openly threatened to rebel. Every day the bar of the Convention was invaded by the sections of Paris, and crowds of people traversed the streets exclaiming, "Bread, bread! We, at least, had bread in 1793! Down with the Republic!"

One day Bonaparte came to dine with us, and after dinner we took a walk out in the direction of the Tuileries. Bonaparte offered my mother his arm, and I walked with my brother. After we had crossed the Passage Feydeau and reached the Boulevard, we heard horrid vociferations against the Convention. "Madame Permon," said Napoleon, "let me advise you not to go any farther. These are not scenes for women to witness. Let me conduct you home, and I will come and gather what news I can, and return to inform you of what I hear." We immediately returned home, and Bonaparte and Albert afterwards went out. Neither of them returned that night. They informed us that they had found it impossible to get back, and, besides, they had been to the Convention. "There they were," said Bonaparte, "roaring for the constitution of 1793: they were like so many madmen." —"And you, Napoleon," said my mother, "what is your opinion of it? I think the constitution of 1793 is a good one." Bonaparte was off his guard, and replied, "Why, it is good in one sense, to be sure, but all that is connected with carnage is bad." Perceiving that my mother smiled, he recollected himself and said: *Ah! Signora Panoria! Signora Panoria! quest'è malissimo! come! mi volete prendere per sopresa?*[1] Then he added with a smile:

[1] "Ah! Madame Panoria! that is very mischievous of you. How! You wish to take me by surprise do you?"

"Oh no! no constitution of '93, I do not like it." That same day Salicetti came to see us. He appeared out of humour, was abstracted, and frequently did not answer to the purpose when he was spoken to. When he was in this sort of humour and conversing with Bonaparte, the discussion was sure to take an angry tone, so that my mother always tried to turn the conversation from politics.

A few evenings before the first of Prairial[1] my mother had a little party. She told the gentlemen whom she invited that she would have no politics introduced. "Is it not enough," said she, "to be roused out of one's sleep of a night by your tocsins and your drums, to say nothing of the harmonious choruses of your market-women; promise me that you will not speak of politics." The promise was given; but the difficulty was to keep it. What was to be talked about? All subjects of conversation were annihilated. The theatres produced nothing, and literature was dead.

Bonaparte for a long time endeavoured to maintain the conversation; but what could he do? Even M. de Narbonne or M. de Talleyrand must have failed. At length it was proposed to tell stories: Bonaparte liked this way of passing an evening, and he began to relate a number of anecdotes which were interesting in themselves, but which were rendered doubly so by his original manner of telling them. He spoke French very badly, frequently committing the grossest faults of language, and his ignorance on certain points of ordinary education was remarkable. Yet, in spite of those disadvantages, every one listened to him with delight. However, after a time the conversation flagged, and an inclination to touch upon the forbidden subject soon predominated. I recollect that at that moment Salicetti, who was in none of the best of humours, was walking about the drawing-room, while the creaking of his boots made that monotonous and irritating noise which always annoyed my mother, but which was now quite intolerable to her, for she was vexed by the dulness of the company. "Salicetti," said

[1] The 18th of May 1795.

she, "can you not be at ease yourself and permit others to be so?" Salicetti, whose thoughts were at that moment wandering in a world far removed from my mother's tea-table circle, gravely turned round, and bowing with an air of constrained politeness, said, "No more, I thank you, I have taken two cups, and I already feel the effect on my nerves." He then resumed his pacing backwards and forwards, while his odious boots creaked more loudly than ever.

Patience was never my mother's prevailing virtue. She hastily rose from her seat, and advanced towards Salicetti with that light step which was so peculiarly her own. Seizing his stout arm with her little hand, she turned him completely round, and he stood not a little astonished at his own *pirouette*. "Salicetti," said she, "I like to be heard when I speak, and when I make a request I wish it to be complied with. This is somewhat despotic, perhaps, but I cannot help it. I am too old to accommodate myself to your new-fashioned customs, and what is more I will not. We women are all queens without kingdoms. We are dethroned; I feel this to my cost, but still, I trust, I retain a little power in my own house. Here at least I am a sovereign, and my subjects must obey me. Do you mean to rebel against my authority?" "No," exclaimed Salicetti, delighted at the graceful manner in which my mother had rebuked him, and seizing her two little hands which he kissed alternately, said, "I rebel against your authority! Certainly not. What have I done that could lead you to suppose so?" His answer was repeated to him, and it turned out as the company had already guessed, that he thought my mother was offering him another cup of tea.

CHAPTER XII.

New troubles in Paris—Bonaparte's poverty—His servant and my mother's femme-de-chambre—The Jardin des Plantes—Mutual confidence—Junot in love with Paulette Bonaparte—Napoleon's characteristic reply—Revolutionary scenes.

MY mother proposed to make a visit to Gascony to settle some business, and afterwards to return to Paris with my father, the state of whose health made her uneasy. She wished to bring him within reach of the best medical assistance; but how was she to return to Paris at a moment when the Revolution, suffering from the crimes committed in its name, could offer no guarantee or security to any one. The Convention, which at that time included many pure and honest republicans, beheld its power braved and disavowed: everything seemed to be returning to that unhappy state, the bare remembrance of which excited horror. In spite of this, balls were resumed, and the theatres were filled every evening. It may truly be said of the French that they meet death singing and dancing. Balls, theatres, and concerts were nightly crowded, while famine was staring us in the face, and we were threatened with all the horrors of anarchy.

Bonaparte came daily to visit my mother, and he frequently entered into warm political discussions with persons whom he met at her residence. These discussions almost always led to violent language, which displeased my mother. But Bonaparte was unfortunate: she knew it, and that consideration rendered her indulgent to him.

My mother told me one day that she had learned some particulars respecting General Bonaparte which very

much distressed her, the more especially as she could do nothing to assist him. These particulars had been communicated to her by Mariette, her femme-de-chambre. Mariette was a very pretty and a very good girl; Bonaparte's servant admired her and wished to marry her. She, however, did not like him; and as he was moreover very poor, she declined his offer. I give these details because they are connected with an affair which I shall presently have to allude to. Bonaparte's servant informed Mariette that the general was often in want of money; "but," added he, "he has an aide-de-camp who shares with him all he gets. When he is lucky at play the largest share of his winnings is always for his general. The aide-de-camp's family sometimes sends him money, and then almost all is given to the general. The general," added the man, "loves this aide-de-camp as dearly as if he were his own brother." This aide-de-camp was no other than Junot, who was destined at a later period to be my husband.

On Bonaparte's return to Paris, after the misfortunes of which he accused Salicetti of being the cause, he was in very destitute circumstances. His family, who were banished from Corsica, found an asylum at Marseilles; and they could not now do for him what they would have done had they been in the country whence they derived their pecuniary resources. From time to time he received remittances of money, and I suspect they came from his excellent brother Joseph, who had then recently married Mademoiselle Clary; but with all his economy, these supplies were insufficient. Bonaparte was therefore in absolute distress. Junot often used to speak of the six months they passed together in Paris at this time. When they took an evening stroll on the Boulevard, which used to be the resort of young men, mounted on fine horses, and displaying all the luxury which they were permitted to show at that time, Bonaparte would declaim against fate, and express his contempt for the dandies with their whiskers and their *oreilles de chien*, who, as they rode past, were eulogising in ecstasy the manner in which Madame

Scio sang *paole pafumée, paole panachée.*[1] "And it is on such beings as these," he would say, "that Fortune confers her favours: Heavens! how contemptible is human nature!"

Junot, whose friendship for Bonaparte was of that ardent kind which is formed only in youth, shared with him all that he received from his family, who though not rich were in easy circumstances. He used sometimes to resort to the gaming-table, but before he did so he invariably deposited in the hands of Bonaparte three-quarters of the allowance he had received from Burgundy: the other quarter was allotted to the chances of *vingt-et-un.* Junot was often successful at play: on those occasions the two friends used to make merry, and pay off their most pressing debts. One morning Bonaparte and Junot were walking together in the Jardin des Plantes. Bonaparte was always fond of these solitary promenades: they rendered him communicative and confiding, and he seemed to feel himself nearer to the presence of the deity, of whom he used to say, a *faithful friend is the true image.*[2]

About this time the Jardin des Plantes had been greatly improved by the exertions of a man whom France ought to remember with gratitude. The Jardin des Plantes, which had originally been confined exclusively to the cultivation of medical plants, became, under the superintendence of M. Tournefort, a nursery for all branches of botany. Buffon, conjointly with Daubenton, formed the cabinet of natural history. Thibaudeau, who was a member of the committee of public instruction, promoted the advancement of the arts and sciences with the enlightened zeal with which he discharged his duty in every other department. He was aided by able auxiliaries in the Jardin des Plantes. Junot's uncle, the Bishop of Metz, a distinguished naturalist, was the intimate friend

[1] This affected mode of dropping the *r* was common among the dandies of that time, or as they used to be called the *incroyables.*

[2] I give this phrase literally; I have often heard it repeated by Bonaparte.

of Daubenton and Buffon. Junot therefore was always kindly received by him, and he often visited the Jardin des Plantes accompanied by his general.

"There," Junot used to say, "we not only inhale pure air, but it seemed, as soon as we passed the gate, that we left a heavy burthen behind us. All around us presented the aspect of peace and kindliness. The evening was generally the time for our visits to M. Daubenton. We used to find him like a patriarch surrounded by his labourers, whose planting and digging he was superintending. He was actively assisted by the brothers Thouin, whose zeal for the science of botany induced them to work in the plantations like common gardeners." The eldest of these two brothers was a man of rare acquirements; and Bonaparte used to be fond of walking with him round the extensive hothouses, which were already beginning to be filled with rare plants, and which subsequently, under his auspices, became the finest temple ever raised to nature in the midst of a city.

On one of Bonaparte's visits to the Jardin des Plantes, after he had lingered longer than usual in conversation with the brothers Thouin, he strolled with Junot into some of the shady avenues of the garden. It was a delicious evening, and a thousand rose trees in full bloom scattered perfume through the air. The two friends walked together arm in arm, and in confident conversation: they were then in closer communion with each other than they ever were afterwards in a gilded cabinet. A lovely night has always a powerful influence on minds susceptible of ardent feeling. Bonaparte was afterwards governed by an overpowering passion, which subjugated every other within him, and reigned paramount: I need not name it. But at this period he was very young, and his heart beat warmly, for he loved. He made Junot his confidante, and spoke on the subject with much acerbity, for his love was not returned. Junot has often told me that if Bonaparte had not himself torn asunder the fetters which then bound him, the consequences of his passion might have been terrible. On this occasion his voice

trembled while he expressed his feelings, and Junot was deeply affected by his emotion. But it was even then plain that there was within him an extraordinary force which struggled against his weakness. He broke off the conversation himself, and appeared to have forgotten the cause of his agitation.

Confidence creates confidence. Junot had also a heart full of feelings which required to be disclosed to a friend, and the ear of Bonaparte had often heard his story. Junot loved, to infatuation, Paulette Bonaparte. His youthful warmth of feeling could not withstand so charming a creature as Paulette then was. His passion was a delirium; but his secret was not a week old when it was made known to his general. Honour commanded the disclosure, since his reason had not enabled him to resist his passion. Bonaparte received his declaration neither with assent nor dissent. He consoled him, however. But what gave him more satisfaction than all the words of his friend, was a belief, amounting almost to certainty, that Paulette would say *Yes* with pleasure, as soon as he should be able to offer her an establishment—not a rich one, as Bonaparte used to remark, but sufficient to be a security against the distressing prospect of bringing into the world children destined to be miserable.

On the very day of which I have been speaking, Junot, emboldened by what Bonaparte had told him in disburthening his own heart, was more than ever urgent on the subject of Paulette. He had received a letter from his father which he showed to Bonaparte. In this letter M. Junot informed his son that he had nothing to give at the moment, but that his part of the family property would one day be 20,000 francs. "I shall then be rich," said Junot, "since with my pay I shall have an income of 1200 livres. My dear general, I beseech you, write to Madame Bonaparte, and tell her that you have seen my father's letter. Would you wish him to write to Marseilles himself?"

On leaving the Jardin des Plantes they crossed the river in a boat, and passed through the streets to the Boulevard. Having arrived in front of the Chinese Baths,

they walked about in the opposite alley. While ascending and descending this part of the Boulevard, Bonaparte listened attentively to Junot; but he was no longer the same man as when under the odoriferous shades they had just quitted. It seemed that on returning to the bustle of life, the tumult of society, he resumed all the fetters and obligations imposed by the state. His manner was, however, always kind. He only pretended to give advice. "I cannot write to my mother to make this proposal," he said; "for you are to have at last, it seems, 1200 livres of income, and that is very well; but you have not got them yet. Your father wears well, my good fellow, and will make you wait a long time for your livres. The truth is, you have nothing but your lieutenant's pay; as to Paulette, she has not so much. So then to sum up; you have nothing, she has nothing—what is the total? Nothing. You cannot, then, marry at present. You must wait. We shall perhaps see better days, my friend—yes! We shall have them, even should I go to seek them in another quarter of the world."[1]

At this period insurrections were things of daily occurrence. That of the 12th of Germinal, which was almost entirely the work of women, had a peculiar character. In the evening and in the course of the following day, we saw several deputies who described the events. Some were quite cast down, and constantly exclaimed, "France is ruined!" The account they gave of what had passed was doubtless alarming. Women had forced their way into the hall in which the representatives of the nation were assembled, and had driven them out. "It was from mere fatigue," said my brother, "that the mob retired." "And what did the Mountain do during the disturbance?" asked my mother. "It supported the demands of the mob. All that I can further say is, that I was told that the noise made by the female insurgents

[1] I have described this conversation fully as Junot related it, because I think the conduct of Bonaparte during the evening in which it occurred was very remarkable. Junot recollected all that passed minutely, and could point out the part of the Boulevard on which they were when Bonaparte spoke those words which later events have rendered so worthy of notice.

Pauline

PRINCESS BORGHESE.

pauline

was so great that nobody could understand what was going on. After their departure the deputies ventured to resume their seats and to proceed to business." Amidst our conversation Salicetti was gloomy and silent. He made me as usual sit down beside him, and spoke of my sister's marriage, or anything else, without paying attention to what I said. However, he thus kept himself in countenance, and avoided a conversation, the subject of which was to him too important to allow of his treating it with indifference.

At the epoch of the first of Prairial there were elements in the Convention capable of producing the most terrible effects. The terrorist party sought to save such of its members as were compromised not only in public opinion but by the fact of being subject to a regular charge of impeachment. The contest was terrible, for it was for life or death. Billaud-Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, and Barrère, were the men chiefly dreaded. From Carnot, Robert Lindet, and others, no evil was to be apprehended, because, though they might perhaps be misled by adopting an erroneous opinion, the public could rely on their honesty. But, good heaven! what a reaction would there have been had the Thermidor party been overthrown! That, however, was the point at issue. The terrorists stirred up the people, who, in a season of scarcity, were easily led astray; and, consequently, we had mobs daily assembled by the cry, "*Vive la Constitution de* '93 *!*" Fortunately the seditions were suppressed. During the trials of the terrorists, Carnot was the only one who displayed a noble character; all the others were miserable creatures; and the whole Convention was almost as contemptible. Had not André Dumont moved and urged with energy the banishment of Barrère, Billaud-Varennes, and Collot-d'Herbois, it is not improbable that the whole Convention would have been outlawed.

The sentence of exile was voted by acclamation, and six deputies were condemned to imprisonment in the castle of Ham.[1] But such was the infatuation of the

[1] Leonard Bourdon, Hugues, Châles, Faussedoise, Duhem, and Choudien.

Convention, that if two steps were made forward towards a public good they were sure to be followed by four backward. The deputies ordered to be arrested walked about Paris, and if they had chosen they might have gone to the theatre on the night of the 13th, for though condemned they were still at liberty: these were indeed the days of anarchy!

It was necessary to act decisively; but at a moment when every journeyman perruquier took the name of Brutus, or Mutius Scævola, there was not in the whole Convention, notwithstanding the great talents which formerly shone in it, a man whom any one would have been simple enough to call a Cicero. However, Thibaudeau at last arose. In an energetic speech he reminded the Convention of its duty to watch over the public safety. The outlawry of the deputies was decreed. General Pichegru received the necessary orders of the Convention, which were speedily executed. Paris remained tranquil, and three deputies were sent to Rochefort.[1]

[1] Barrère went there with the others, but as usual he took care not to make one in a disagreeable party. He contrived to stop at Rochefort and did not embark. The French, who laugh at everything, said this was the first time that Barrère did not follow the stream. A man of wit has said of him that he is one of those characters who are neither esteemed nor hated.

CHAPTER XIII.

The 20th May—Project of bombarding the Faubourg Saint Antoine—Death of Ferraud—Salicetti on the list of the proscribed—He flies for refuge to my mother's lodgings—His concealment—Bonaparte's visit to my mother—Remarkable conversation.

THE victory thus obtained over the terrorist party on the 1st of April might have induced a belief that that party, as far at least as it had power to do mischief, was annihilated, and that the pure republicans who composed its extreme right, brought round to the good cause, would promote centralisation as a means of union, and more especially as a means of averting the anarchy which threatened the state. But the Convention, which was then the sole representative power, was so wretchedly organised, and held out so discouraging a prospect, that the genius of disorder raised its head, and threatened once more to plunge all into chaos.

The Convention was no longer popular because it manifested no readiness to alleviate the sufferings of the people, now rendered intolerable. Aversion had succeeded to the attachment which the public once fondly cherished for the Convention, and this was especially the case in Paris. Meanwhile the enemies of order took advantage of these elements of mischief, and did all in their power to fan the flame.

On the morning of the 20th of May we were awakened by loud shouts in the streets; the tocsin sounded to arms, and another day of blood was added to the calendar which took its date from 1789! Enough

has already been said of that dreadful day. I recollect that terror reigned everywhere. The conspirators had promised a day of pillage to the three faubourgs, and particularly to that of St. Antoine. The whole population of this last district was in arms: they were in the extreme of misery. There was greater reason to dread the issue of this day than that of the 14th of July, the 6th of October, or the 10th of August. It was not a castle or a court to which the animosity of the people was directed, but everything elevated above the very lowest grade of society was marked out in the list of proscription. This it was that saved France as well as the Convention. All those who had anything to lose united themselves into corps, which were very superior to unorganised masses acting without any plan, and apparently without leaders.

Whilst the most frightful scenes were passing in the Convention, the respectable inhabitants of Paris shut themselves up in their houses, concealed their valuables, and awaited with fearful anxiety the result. Towards evening, my brother, whom we had not seen during the whole day, came home to get something to eat; he was almost famished, not having tasted food since the morning. Disorder still raged, and we heard the most frightful noise in the streets, mingled with the beating of drums. The faubourg St. Antoine, which had been regularly armed in pursuance of the proposition of Tallien, excited the most serious alarm. My brother had scarcely finished his hasty repast when General Bonaparte arrived to make a similar demand upon our hospitality. He also told us he had tasted nothing since the morning, for all the restaurateurs were closed.[1] He contented himself with that which my brother had left, and, while eating, he told us the news of the day. It was most appalling! My brother had informed us but of part. He did not know of the assassination of the unfortunate Ferraud, whose body had been cut almost piecemeal. "They took his head," said Bonaparte, "and presented it to poor Boissy-

[1] These establishments were not so numerous in those days as at present.

d'Anglas,[1] and the shock of this fiend-like act was almost death to the president in his chair. Truly," added he, "if we continue thus to sully our revolution, it will be a disgrace to be a Frenchman."

Perhaps the most alarming circumstance was the project entertained by Barras of bombarding the faubourg St. Antoine. "He is at this moment," said Bonaparte, "at the end of the Boulevard, and proposes, so he tells me, to throw bombs into the faubourg: I have counselled him by no means to do so. The population of the faubourg would issue forth and disperse through Paris, committing every excess. It is altogether very sad work. Have you seen Salicetti during the last few days?" he inquired, after a moment's silence; "they say he is implicated in the affair of Soubrani and Bourbotte. It is likewise suspected that Romme is compromised in that business. I shall be very sorry for it. Romme is a worthy man, and I believe a staunch and honest republican. As to Salicetti!" Here Bonaparte paused, struck his forehead with his hand, contracted his eyebrows, and his whole frame seemed agitated. In a voice trembling with emotion, he continued, "Salicetti has injured me greatly. He has thrown a cloud over the bright dawn of my youth—he has blighted my hopes of glory! I say again he has done me much wrong. However, I bear him no ill will." My brother was about to defend Salicetti. "Cease, Permon, cease," exclaimed Bonaparte; "that man, I tell you, has been my evil genius. Dumerbion really loved me, and would have employed me suitably; but that report spread at my return from Genoa, and to which malice lent its venom to make it the foundation of an accusation—that report ought, in reality, to have been a source of honour to me! No! I may forgive, but to forget is another matter. Yet, as I said before, I bear him no ill will." While speaking thus, Bonaparte appeared abstracted. About midnight he departed with my brother.

[1] The admirable conduct of Boissy-d'Anglas on that day will always be mentioned in history.

Next day we learned that the Convention had ordered the arrest of several of its members, among whom were Soubrani, Romme, Bourbotte, etc.; Salicetti's name was not mentioned. "Here are more proscriptions," said my mother. "My dear," said she to Albert, "we are no doubt under great obligations to Salicetti for what he has done for your father and you; but gratitude cannot make me indifferent to the impropriety of receiving a man who is accused of wishing to bring back the days of 1793. Salicetti is not on the lists of the proscribed, therefore I can, with a clear conscience, give him to understand that his visits are not agreeable. His opinions are becoming every day less and less in unison with mine."

This was on the 21st of May: my mother expected a party of friends to dinner. She was to leave Paris in a few days for Bordeaux, and in four months was to return with my father to Paris. Bonaparte was one of the company invited to dine with us that day. It was six o'clock. One of the guests had arrived, and my mother was sitting in the drawing-room conversing with him, when Mariette came and whispered to her that there was somebody in her chamber who wished to speak with her alone. The girl added, "I know who it is, madam—you may come." My mother immediately rose and went to her chamber, and beheld near the window a man, half-concealed by the curtain. He made a sign to her with his hand. My mother called me, and desiring me to shut the door, advanced towards this man, whom, to her astonishment, she discovered to be Salicetti. He was as pale as death; his lips were as white as his teeth, and his dark eyes appeared to flash fire! He was truly frightful. "I am proscribed," he said to my mother, in an under-tone, and in breathless haste; "that is to say, I am condemned to death. But for Gautier, whom I just now met on the Boulevard, I was going to that den of brigands, and should have been lost." "Madame Permon," he continued, after a pause, during which his eyes were steadfastly fixed on my mother; "Madame Permon

I hope I have not been deceived in relying on your generosity. You will save me. To prevail on you to do so I need not, I am sure, remind you that I saved your son and husband."

My mother took Salicetti by the hand and conducted him into the next room, which was my bedchamber. Several persons had now assembled in the drawing-room, and she thought she heard the voice of Bonaparte. She was ready to faint with terror. In my chamber she knew she could not be overheard. "Salicetti," she said, "I will not waste time in words. All that I can grant you may command; but, there is one thing more dear to me than life, that is, the safety of my children. By concealing you for a few hours, and this house cannot afford you any longer security, I shall not save you, and I only bring my own head to the scaffold, and probably endanger the lives of my children. I owe you gratitude, but I leave you to yourself to determine whether I ought to carry it thus far."

I never saw my mother look so beautiful as when at this moment she fixed her eyes earnestly on me. "I am not so selfish," replied Salicetti, "as to ask for anything which may expose you to such danger. My plan is this, and on it rests my only hope. This house being an hotel, will be the last to be suspected. The woman who keeps it has, I presume, no objection to get money; I will give her plenty: let me remain concealed here only eight days. At the expiration of that time you are to set out for Gascony; you can take me with you, and thus save my life. If you refuse me an asylum, even for a few hours, I shall be dragged to the scaffold, there to forfeit my life, while I saved that of your husband and your son." "Salicetti," said my mother, "this is unkind and ungenerous: you know my obligation to you, and you take advantage of it. I ask you again what I can do for you, situated as I am in this public hotel, a house which is filled with strangers, and which is the daily resort of your enemies; for you know that Bonaparte is your enemy. Besides, the mistress of this house is hostile to your

opinions, and I doubt whether any reward could induce her to hazard her life to serve you. In short we are surrounded by difficulties."

At this moment the chamber-door opened, and my mother ran towards the person who was about to enter. It was Albert; he came to inquire why dinner was delayed. "All the company have arrived," he said, "except Bonaparte, and he has sent an apology." My mother clasped her hands, and raised them to heaven: she desired him to go downstairs, and she followed him. "I was just reading a letter which I have received from your sister. She has sent me a *dinde aux truffes*, and if our friends will wait so long for dinner, we will have it cooked for to-day; if not, it will be a reason for another little party." My mother uttered these words as she entered the drawing-room, holding in her hand a letter which she had snatched up in passing through her own chamber.

Her reason for inventing this long story was that the gentleman whom she left in the drawing-room, when Mariette called her out, was a most notorious gossip, and she took it for granted that he had already told all the company that there was something very mysterious in her disappearance. But her manner was so natural, that no one had the least doubt of the arrival of the *dinde aux truffes*, which it was unanimously agreed should be cooked next day. My mother then begged leave to retire for a few moments to finish her letter. She hastened to her chamber, slipped the bolt of her door, and rejoined Salicetti, whom she found seated in a chair with his head leaning on both his hands. "We may esteem ourselves happy," said she, "that Bonaparte is not here to scrutinise our words and looks. Now let us settle what is to be done." "If you are willing," said Salicetti, "the thing is easy: will you consent to save me?" My mother did not give an immediate reply. Her frequent change of colour betrayed the violent agitation of her feelings. At length she became so pale that I thought she would have fainted away. Salicetti, who interpreted her silence as a refusal, took up his hat, muttered some words which I did

not distinctly hear, and was about to leave the room when my mother caught him by the arm.

"Stay," she said, "this roof is yours. My son must discharge his debt, and it is my duty to discharge my husband's." "Enough, enough," said Salicetti, "all will be well. Now go and join your company. Mariette will take care of me. I have said but two words to her, yet those two magic words have power to make her lay down her life to serve me. My dear girl," said he to me, drawing me back as I was about to follow my mother, "I have spoken before you because I know you cannot remain in ignorance of this affair. I need not warn you of the consequences of indiscretion." "Ah! fear nothing," I exclaimed, throwing myself into my mother's arms, whose eyes were fixed upon me with an expression of despair. My dear mother thought only of her children at that moment when her own head was at stake. She stayed a minute longer in her chamber to recover herself. Her ardent feelings rendered her agitation extreme; but she was gifted with wonderful self-control, and when she entered the drawing-room nobody would have suspected that she had to conceal an important secret from the knowledge of those who surrounded her.

The dinner was very gay. The company were animated by a feeling of satisfaction at the result of the events of the two preceding days. Brunetière was of the party, and, though never deficient in cheerfulness, his spirits seemed that day to be doubled. As soon as the company had departed, my mother acquainted Albert with Salicetti's concealment. My brother trembled for her and for me; but he saw the necessity of actively adopting some precautions for Salicetti's security.

After some deliberation it was resolved to adopt Salicetti's suggestion and communicate the secret to Madame Grétry, the mistress of the hotel. She readily entered into our views. "I can manage this affair," said she. "It is only necessary that Madame Permon should change her apartment. There is a hiding-place in her chamber which saved four people during the reign

of terror. It shall save more. At least while I live here."

All the necessary arragements were immediately made. We gave out to our friends that my mother had received a letter from my father, in which he mentioned that he was coming to Paris, and that, consequently, my mother was not to set off. Some time after we were to pretend we had received a second letter from my father, requesting my mother to come to him. It was important to have a reason for everything we did.

Next morning about eleven o'clock we received a visit from General Bonaparte, and, as the scene which then ensued made a greater impression on me than almost any event of my life, I will describe it minutely: Bonaparte was at that time attired in the costume he wore almost ever after. He had on a gray greatcoat, very plainly made, buttoned up to his chin, a round hat, which was either drawn over his forehead so as almost to conceal his eyes, or stuck upon the back of his head so that it appeared in danger of falling off, and a black cravat, very clumsily tied. This was Bonaparte's usual dress. At that period, indeed, nobody, either man or woman, paid any great attention to elegance of appearance, and I must confess that Bonaparte's costume did not then appear so droll as it now does on recollection. He brought with him a bouquet of violets, which he presented to my mother. This piece of gallantry was so extraordinary on his part that we could not help smiling at it. He smiled too, and said: "I suppose I make but a sorry *cavaliere servante*."

"Well, Madame Permon," said he, after some further conversation, "Salicetti will now in his turn be able to appreciate the bitter fruits of arrest! And to him they ought to be the more bitter, because the trees which bear them were first planted by him and his adherents." "How," exclaimed my mother with an air of astonishment, at the same time motioning me to close the drawing-room door, "is Salicetti arrested?" "How! do you not know that he has been proscribed since yester-

day? I presumed that you must know the fact since it was in your house that he was concealed." "Concealed in my house!" cried my mother, "surely, my dear Napoleon, you are mad! Methinks before I entered into such a scheme it would be as well to have a place I could call *my house.* I beseech you, general, do not repeat such a joke in any other place. I assure you it would be endangering my life."

Bonaparte rose from his seat, advanced slowly towards my mother, and crossing his arms, fixed his eyes on her for some time in silence. My mother did not flinch beneath his eagle glance. "Madame Permon," he said, "Salicetti is concealed in your house; nay, do not interrupt me, I know that yesterday, at five o'clock, he was seen on the Boulevard, speaking with Gauthier, who advised him not to go to the Convention. He then proceeded in this direction; and it is very well known that he has not in this neighbourhood any acquaintance, you excepted, who would risk their own safety as well as that of their friends by secreting him. Now, he has not been at the Palais Egalité, he therefore must have fled to you for an asylum." "And by what right," replied my mother, with unshaken firmness, "should Salicetti seek an asylum here? He is well aware that our political sentiments are at variance; he knew, too, that I was on the point of leaving Paris; for had I not received a letter from my husband I should have been on the road to Gascony to-morrow morning." "My dear Madame Permon, you may well ask by what right he should apply to you for concealment? To come to a lone woman, who might be compromised for affording some few hours of safety to an outlaw who merits his fate, is an act to which no consideration ought to have driven him. You owe him *gratitude:* that is a bill of exchange you are bound to honour; and he has come in person to demand payment. Has he not, Mademoiselle Loulou?" As he pronounced these words he turned sharply round towards me.

I was sitting at the window at work, and at the

moment he spoke I pretended to be looking at one of the pots of flowers which were before me. My mother, who understood my meaning, said, "Laurette, General Bonaparte speaks to you, my dear!" Thus challenged I looked up, and my embarrassment might naturally have been attributed to my consciousness of having been unintentionally rude: so I hoped at least; but we had to deal with one who was not to be imposed upon. Bonaparte took my hand, and, pressing it between both his own, said to my mother, "I ask your pardon, madam, I have done wrong: your daughter has taught me a lesson." "You give her credit for what she does not deserve," replied my mother; "she has taught you no lesson, but I will teach you one by and by, if you persist in an assertion for which there is no foundation, and which, if repeated abroad, would entail very serious consequences to me."

In a tone of considerable emotion Bonaparte replied: "Madame Permon, you are an excellent woman, and Salicetti is a villain; you could not close your doors against him, he was well aware; and he would cause you to compromise your own safety and that of your child! I never liked him, now I despise him; he has done me mischief enough; but for that he has had his motives, and you have known them. Is it not so?" My mother shook her head. "What, has Permon never told you?" "Never." "Well! that is astonishing! But you shall know some day or other. Salicetti, in that affair of Loano, behaved like a wretch. Junot would have killed him if I had not prevented him. That spirited youth, animated by friendship for me, wanted to challenge him, and swore he would throw him out of the window if he refused to meet him. Now Salicetti is proscribed, and in his turn will have to experience all the misery attendant on a broken fortune!" "Napoleon," said my mother, taking him by the hand, and fixing upon him a look of kindness, "I assure you on my honour that Salicetti is not in my apartments; but stay—shall I tell you all?"—"Tell me! tell me!" exclaimed Napoleon, with a vehemence uncommon to him. "Well then, Salicetti was under my

roof yesterday at six o'clock; but he left it a few hours after. I pointed out to him the moral impossibility of his remaining with me, living as I do in a hotel. Salicetti admitted the justness of my objection, and took his departure."

Whilst my mother was speaking, Bonaparte kept his eyes fixed upon her with indescribable earnestness; when she had concluded, he began to pace about the room with hurried steps. "'Tis just as I suspected," he exclaimed; "he was coward enough to say to a woman, 'Expose your life for mine.' But did the wretch who came to interest you in his fate, did he tell you that he had just assassinated one of his colleagues? Had he, think you, even washed his gory hands before he touched yours to implore your protection?"—"*Napoleone! Napoleone!*" exclaimed my mother, "*quest' è troppo! Tacete; se non tacete, me ne vado. Se hanno ammazzato quest' uomo, poi non è colpa sua!*"[1]

Whenever my mother was violently excited she always spoke Italian or Greek, and often to people who understood neither the one nor the other. Salicetti heard the whole of this conversation, for he was separated from us only by a thin partition; as for me, I trembled under the momentous expectation of seeing him issue from his hiding-place. I then knew but little of the world. After some further conversation of the same kind, Bonaparte rose to take his leave. "Then you really believe he returned home?" said he, as he took up his hat. "Yes," replied my mother; "I told him that since he must conceal himself in Paris it were best to bribe the people of his own hotel, because that would be the last place where his enemies would think of searching for him." Bonaparte then left us, and it was high time, for my poor mother was exhausted. She beckoned me to go and bolt her chamber-door, and open that of Salicetti's retreat.

I never liked Salicetti. There was something about

[1] Napoleon! Napoleon! this is too much! Be silent; if you are not, leave me! Though the man has been murdered, it does not follow that it is his fault.

him, which to me was always repulsive. When I read the story of the *Vampire*, I associated that ideal character with the recollection of Salicetti. His pale jaundiced complexion, his dark glaring eyes, his lips, which turned deadly white whenever he was agitated by any powerful emotion, all seemed present to me. When I opened the door after Bonaparte's departure the sight of Salicetti produced in me a feeling of horror which I shall never forget. He sat on a small chair at the bedside, his head leaning on his hand, which was covered with blood, as was likewise the bed itself, and a basin over which he was leaning, was full. He had been seized with a hæmorrhage, and streams of blood were running from his mouth and nose. His face was frightfully pallid, and his whole appearance affected me to such a degree that it haunted me in dreams a long time after. My mother ran to him; he had nearly swooned. She took his hand; it was quite cold. We called up Mariette; and on her applying some vinegar to his nose he recovered.

CHAPTER XIV.

The trial of Romme, Soubrani, and their colleagues—Project for saving Salicetti—Sentence and death of the prisoners—Horrible scene.

PREPARATIONS were making for the trial of the parties accused of the proceedings of May. The officers were on the look-out for Salicetti, and another representative. Salicetti was not beloved by his colleagues. He was certainly a man of talent, and full of ambition; but the projects he wished to realise were of a nature to bring down on their author severe retribution. Romme, a distinguished mathematician, was already arrested, as was also Goujon, who, since the opening of the Convention, had rendered himself remarkable for his private virtues and republican sentiments; Soubrani, Duquesnoi, Duroi, and Bourbotte, were also in custody. Each of these individuals were distinguished, as well by their personal character as by their statesman-like qualities. What reflections were awakened at seeing such men seated on the criminal bench!

My mother received a letter from my father, who, having heard of the danger of Salicetti, desired her to do whatever she could to render him assistance. This letter was delivered to her by M. Emilhaud, of Bordeaux, a gentleman who appeared to possess the full confidence of my father.

One day, when M. Emilhaud called upon my mother, he brought with him a Spanish general named Miranda. While these gentlemen were in the drawing-room conversing with my mother I had occasion to pass through

the antechamber; but no sooner had I entered, than I started suddenly. I thought I saw Salicetti standing before me. Never was resemblance more striking, except that the individual whom I for a moment mistook for Salicetti was not quite so tall as he. The man was a Spaniard, in the service of General Miranda.

By chance I mentioned this resemblance without thinking it a matter of importance. However, it happened to suggest a lucky idea to my mother. "We are saved!" she exclaimed. "It will be hard, indeed, if we cannot find in all Paris a man five feet six inches (French) high, with a face like General Miranda's servant." My brother, Salicetti, and Madame Grétry were immediately summoned to hold a council. "I must look out for a valet," said my mother; "and when I find one who *will suit me*, I will take him to the section to get a passport. Having got possession of the passport, I can easily find a pretence to quarrel with my valet, and if I turn him off with a month's wages he will no doubt be very well satisfied." My mother clapped her little hands at the thought of this stratagem. She was quite overjoyed; but, alas! a scene speedily ensued which changed all her happiness to grief and horror.

Meanwhile the trial of the prisoners came on. They had been brought to Paris, and the special court-martial appointed to try them held its sittings in the Rue Neuve-des-Petits Champs. Salicetti was the only one who had escaped the grasp of justice; and, urged by his anxiety, my brother was constantly on the road from our hotel to the Rue Neuve-des-Petits Champs during the short time that was expended in deliberating on the fate of the unfortunate men. One day he returned home dreadfully agitated. He had witnessed an awful scene. Romme, Soubrani, Duroi, Duquesnoi, Goujon, and Bourbotte, were condemned. During their trial they had exhibited the most admirable fortitude, feeling, and patriotism. The conduct of Romme, in particular, is said to have been sublime.

When sentence was pronounced on them they sur-

veyed each other calmly and serenely; and on descending the grand staircase, which was lined with spectators, Romme looked about as if seeking somebody. Probably the person who had promised to be there had not the courage to attend. "No matter," said he, "with a firm hand this will do. *Vive la Liberté!*" Then drawing from his pocket a very large penknife, or perhaps it might more properly be called a small poniard, he plunged it into his heart, and, drawing it out again, gave it to Goujon, who, in like manner, passed it to Duquesnoi. All three fell dead instantly without uttering a groan. The weapon of deliverance, transmitted to Soubrani by the trembling hands of Duquesnoi, found its way to the noble hearts of the rest; but they were not so fortunate as their three friends. Grievously wounded, but yet alive, they fell at the foot of the scaffold, which the executioners made them ascend, bleeding and mutilated as they were. Such barbarity would scarcely have been committed by savages.

My brother stood so near Romme, to whom he wished to address a few words of friendship and consolation, that the blood of the unfortunate man dropped upon him. My brother's coat was stained with the scarcely cold blood of a man, who, only a few days before, was seated in the very chamber, perhaps in the very chair, in which Albert was then sitting. The appearance of Salicetti inspired nothing but horror; indeed, I could not bear to look on him, so much did I dread his aspect. Without any consideration for my brother's feelings he made him repeat, over and over again, the dreadful details of the tragedy he had just witnessed.

Bonaparte had gone to Saint-Maur to spend a few days. He was in the habit of going there occasionally, though I do not know to whom. I have since put the question to Junot, who declared he knew nothing of the matter, and added that Bonaparte was very reserved on some subjects. When informed of the horrible catastrophe detailed above he expressed the genuine emotions of his heart; and in spite of all that Madame Bourrienne

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says,[1] I maintain that at this period he was a very feeling man. Bonaparte had in general a bad delivery; I mean to say he was not eloquent in his manner of expressing himself. His concise style took from his language that air of courtesy, or at least of elegance, which is indispensable to the most ordinary conversation. The fact is, he was only eloquent at moments when his heart expanded: then it was, as the fairy legends say, that pearls and rubies dropped from his mouth.

The present was one of those occasions; and the unfortunate men who had just suffered found in Bonaparte an admirable panegyrist. Far different was his language towards Salicetti, Fréron, and all those who, he said, wanted to renew the reign of terror. The mention of these names led him to speak of himself, and of his blighted hopes, and his misfortunes. "Yet I am only twenty-six years old," exclaimed he, striking his forehead, "only twenty-six." He then regarded my mother with a look so melancholy, that she said, after he was gone, "When I think on that young man's unhappiness, I almost reproach myself for what I have done for his enemy."

[1] See Bourrienne's *Memoirs of Napoleon.*

CHAPTER XV.

Salicetti's proxy—We procure our passports—Our departure for Bordeaux—The first post—Generous letter from Bonaparte—Salicetti's ingratitude—Our arrival at Bordeaux—Difficulty of obtaining a vessel for Salicetti—We proceed to Cette—Salicetti sails for Genoa—Our arrival at Montpellier.

WE had above thirty applicants for the valet's situation, but none of them would do. When any one presented himself who did not possess the requisite personal qualifications, my mother immediately sent him about his business. What trampling there was up and down the staircase of the Hotel de la Tranquillité! At last an overgrown boy, named Gabriel Tachard, made his appearance. He bore, it is true, no resemblance to Salicetti, yet we thought he might pass very well for his proxy at the section. He was a stupid fellow, who would not certainly have remained in my mother's service a week, but he possessed the conjoined recommendations of being exactly five feet six, with black eyes and hair, a straight nose, round chin, and a sallow complexion, and slightly marked with the smallpox. The next quality to be combined with all these was the right age, or at least the semblance of it; for Salicetti was, I believe, at that period thirty. However, we went to the section, my brother, myself, Mariette, Gabriel Tachard, and Madame Grétry, who was to answer for her lodger.

We were supplied with passports, and all returned pleased, my mother and myself at the prospect of leaving Paris, Gabriel at having, as he thought, obtained a good place, and Madame Grétry at getting rid of her lodgers;

for, spite of its name, her hotel had been one interrupted scene of tumult ever since Salicetti had, by dint of gold, obtained permission to make it his hiding-place.

For the last eight days my mother had given out to her friends that my father expected her at Bordeaux. She now received another letter, enjoining her instant departure. In consequence, she determined to set off in two days. "You do well to go," said Bonaparte, taking her hand, and looking at her significantly; "and yet you were wise in not going sooner."—"Why so?"—"Oh, I cannot tell you now; but you shall know before your return to Paris."—"But I cannot wait; you know that we women are curious."—"Well, you shall know the reason. At what time do you set out?"—"I do not exactly know; but I suppose about eleven or twelve to-night, in order to avoid the heat. It is best in hot weather to travel by night and sleep by day."—"Exactly so: an excellent thought that. Well," continued he, "you shall know my little secret when you arrive at Longjumeau."—"And why at Longjumeau?"—"It is a whim of mine," replied he.—"Well, be it so; but I must tell you *en passant*, my dear Napoleon, that you are a sad gossip."

While this conversation was going on our dinner hour arrived, and Napoleon stayed and dined with us. During dinner he said to my mother, "I wish you would take me with you on this journey. I will go and see my mother while you are settling your business at Bordeaux and Toulouse; I will then rejoin you and M. Permon, and we will all return together to Paris. I am quite idle here, thanks to that villain who has ruined me. I am now ready to be anything — a Chinese, a Turk, or a Hottentot. Indeed, if you do not take me with you I shall go to Turkey or to China. There the British power may be most effectively injured by a commercial treaty with the Turks or Chinese." He then began to talk on politics with my brother, and in less than an hour's time the Emperor of China was converted to Catholicism, and the grand calao was superseded by a minister of justice.

At length the day of our departure arrived. Several

of our friends came to take leave of us, and, among others, Bonaparte. He stepped up to my mother, and taking her by the hand, said, in a low tone, "When you return, think of this day. We may perhaps never meet again. Ere long my destiny will lead me far from France; but, wheresoever I go, I shall ever be your faithful friend." My mother answered him that he might at all times reckon on her friendship. "You know, my dear Bonaparte," she added, "that I look upon you in the light of my Albert's brother." Our friends departed; post-horses were procured, and Madame Grétry, though already munificently rewarded, was promised besides a considerable compliment when Salicetti should have embarked. As to the valet, my mother dismissed him with a month's wages in advance, to his infinite satisfaction. Salicetti then assumed the name of Gabriel Tachard, under which he was to travel into the south of France.

We set out. Salicetti seated himself on the box of my mother's travelling berline, and we got out of Paris without any other delay than that occasioned by the examination at the barrier. The postillion, on the promise of something to drink, brought us with the speed of lightning to the Croix de Berny. As we were about to start again, the first postillion from the Paris post came to the door of the coach and asked for citoyenne Permon. My mother asked him what he wanted? "I have a letter for you," said he.—"You surely are mistaken," said my mother; "it cannot be for me."—"No," rejoined the man; "I do not mistake, if your are citoyenne Permon." At that instant the recollection of the words of Bonaparte flashed across my mother's memory. She took the letter, and offered the bearer an assignat of five francs; but he refused to accept it, saying that he had been already paid by *the young man.* At the season of the year at which we were travelling the nights were short; my mother's curiosity was not, therefore, kept long in suspense; daylight soon enabled her to peruse the letter. The handwriting neither of us knew. I have since, however, learned that it was Junot's. This very singular

epistle places the character of Napoleon in a light from which his enemies have often sought to exclude it. It was couched in the following words:—

(*Translation.*)

"I never like to be thought a dupe. I should seem to be one in your eyes if I did not tell you that I knew of Salicetti's place of concealment more than twenty days ago. You may recollect, Madame Permon, what I said to you on the first of Prairial. I was almost morally certain of the fact; now I know it positively.

"You see then, Salicetti, that I might have returned the ill you did to me. In so doing I should only have avenged myself; but you injured me when I had not offended you. Which of us stands in the preferable point of view at this moment? I might have taken my revenge; but I did not. Perhaps you will say that your benefactress was your safeguard. That consideration, I confess, was powerful. But alone, unarmed, and an outlaw, your life would have been sacred to me. Go, seek in peace an asylum where you may learn to cherish better sentiments for your country. About your name my mouth is closed. Repent, and appreciate my motives.

"Madame Permon, my best wishes are with you and your child. You are feeble and defenceless beings. May Providence and a friend's prayers protect you! Be cautious, and do not stay in the large towns through which you may have to pass.

"Adieu."

The letter had no signature. My mother, after having read it, remained for some time absorbed in profound reflection. She then handed it to me, desiring me in Greek to read it to myself. I was thunderstruck. The look which accompanied the few words my mother said to me in Greek sufficiently indicated on whom her suspicion lay; and, I confess, I could not help sharing it. I looked at Mariette, who rode in the carriage with us. She was pale, and her eyes were red with weeping. I had observed that she had been singularly low-spirited, and

sighed frequently during the whole of the journey. I was convinced my conjecture was right.

We stopped to breakfast. I think it was at Etampas; and my mother showed Salicetti the letter. He read it over and over at least ten times. At length he exclaimed, "I am lost! I am lost! Fool that I was, to trust to a woman's prudence!"—"Salicetti," said my mother, suppressing her irritation; "you yourself have been the only imprudent person in this affair; and your unjust reproach is a compliment to us; I mean to my daughter and me; for you must rely very confidently on our generosity, when you can venture to reward us thus for all that we have done for you." Before my mother had ended her reply, Salicetti already repented of his foolish exclamation. He very humbly asked our pardon. He then said he had heard us express some suspicion of Mariette. "Never mind, never mind," said my mother, "you ought rather to admire the noble conduct of Bonaparte, it is most generous!"—"Generous!" repeated Salicetti, with a contemptuous smile. "What would you have had him do? Would you have wished him to betray me?" My mother looked at him steadfastly, and then said: "I do not know what I would have him do; but this I know, that I should wish to see *you* grateful."

I may here mention that Mariette was really the guilty party. Bonaparte's servant was her lover; his master profited by this circumstance; and the present of a gold cross induced the poor girl to betray a secret which might have compromised the safety of the whole house. As to my mother her fate was certain.

When we had passed through Tours, Salicetti travelled inside the berline. As we drove along we heard nothing but imprecations against the Convention, and all those who had wished to bring back the reign of terror. The people were in a state of great excitement. "Heavens!" said my mother, "if you were known here, what would become of us!" We had good reason for alarm in several parts of our journey; but, at length, we arrived in safety at Bordeaux. There, to our great surprise,

instead of finding my father, we found only a letter from him, in which he informed us that he was obliged to depart for the country; but that his friend M. Emilhaud would attend my mother; and he gave her his address, that she might send for him on her arrival.

In a quarter of an hour afterwards M. Emilhaud was with us. We learned from him that my father had made unavailing inquiries for a vessel that would convey a passenger to Italy. None would start for the space of a fortnight. Ships were going to the United States, to St. Domingo, and to England; but Salicetti neither could nor would go anywhere, except to Genoa or Venice. My mother was in despair. Next day, however, Laudois, my father's *valet de chambre*, came to us. He informed us that my father had ascertained that at Narbonne or at Cette a vessel would sail for Genoa, and several for Venice. He had, in consequence, made an arrangement with the master of a yacht to convey us up the Garonne as far as Toulouse, and from thence by the canal to Carcassonne. The carriage could be taken on board the yacht; and from Carcassonne we should only have to travel a few leagues to reach Cette or Narbonne. My father thought this mode of travelling much safer for us than by land on account of the rigid orders that had everywhere been issued. Salicetti was quite of my father's opinion; and, with the assistance of Laudois, we were soon on board the yacht and sailing up the Garonne.

We soon arrived at Carcassonne, and from thence reached Narbonne; but here we found no vessel going to Italy. We proceeded to Cette; and there we learned that two vessels were about to sail, the one in two days for Trieste, and the other that same evening for Genoa. The captain of the latter vessel, which, singularly enough, was named the *Convention*, informed us that he should be under weigh at nine o'clock; and, as the wind was fair, he should not be long in reaching his destination. Salicetti was inclined to wait for the vessel bound for Trieste, but my mother would hear of no further delay. She observed that the wind might not be fair for Trieste

on the day appointed, and that it was best to take advantage of the favourable breeze that was blowing that evening.

We sat down to dinner; and when we had ended our repast Laudois and the servants of the inn conveyed the baggage of the fugitive on board the vessel. Salicetti stepped up to my mother, and, taking both her hands in his, said: "I should have too much to say, Madame Permon, were I to attempt to express my gratitude by words. As to Bonaparte, tell him I thank him. Hitherto I did not believe him capable of generosity; I am now bound to acknowledge my mistake. I thank him." He jumped into a little boat with the captain of the *Convention*, and was soon on board the vessel which was to convey him to the shore where he hoped to find refuge rather than hospitality. We slept that night at the inn at Cette; and next morning, after breakfast, we set out for Montpellier. On our arrival there I discovered that death, emigration, and civil discord had committed melancholy ravages in that city.

CHAPTER XVI.

Couder's invitation to my father—Salicetti's letter to my mother—Madame de St. Ange—Her present to Bonaparte—Trading speculation—Bonaparte and Bartolomeo Peraldi.

I HAVE several times mentioned that my poor father's health had suffered from the miseries of the Revolution. His feelings and his interests were alike wounded. The vexations he had suffered brought on a serious illness, which was augmented by the state of seclusion in which he chose to live. My mother was accustomed to mingle with the world, and her quick perception soon enabled her to discover that my father's situation was not without danger.

Couder, the procureur of the commune, whom I have already mentioned as a worthy honest man, warned my mother of the disagreeable reports which were in circulation at Toulouse respecting my father. "It is said," observed Couder, "that he is ill of the aristocratic fever; I denied the truth of the report, and contended that the citizen Permon was a staunch republican. I know very well," replied he, smiling significantly, "that that is not quite true; but there is no harm in a little falsehood sometimes. However, if you will take my advice you will force citizen Permon a little more into society. If he would do me the honour to accept a place in my box at the theatre. If . . . ." Here Couder was a little embarrassed. "Generous man!" cried my mother, as she shook the honest shoemaker's rough hand; "generous man!—yes, we will come to your box; I am sure Permon and I will feel honoured by your kind offer."

"Charles," said she to my father, as soon as the procureur had left her, "do you know what Couder has been saying?" and she related the conversation which had taken place, without forgetting the proposition about the box. My father turned red and made no reply. But when my mother pressed him for an answer, he shrugged his shoulders and, with a bitter smile, said, "What a question! What would you have me do? Citizen Couder (and he laid a great emphasis on the word *citizen*) summons citizen Permon to the bar of his box. We must of course go; that is better than to be dragged to a dungeon by gendarmes; I have only that alternative. I believe this is a second Thirion. O Marie, Marie, you might have spared me this insult!" My mother burst into tears. "Charles," she exclaimed, "you view this matter in a wrong light; you misconstrue the intentions of your friends. Do you believe that I would have listened to an invitation which bore the least appearance of an insult to you?"—"Doubtless; my dear Marie," exclaimed my father, impatiently interrupting her, "let this man make your shoes, but speak to me no more about his box. I am tired of this," said he, throwing himself upon his couch. There the conversation ended; and it may be supposed that my father did not go to the theatre.

Couder was told that my father was ill, and he received the excuse without appearing hurt. Had he listened to the dictates of wounded pride he might have done us a great deal of harm.

Salicetti often wrote to my mother. Shortly after the scene I have just described she received a letter from him which showed that he had heard my father was hostile to the government. "Be on your guard, dear Signora Panoria," he said, "I hear that plots are being secretly and silently organised. They say the Royalists are about to rise. Certainly, I am far from suspecting citizen Permon of engaging in any conspiracy, for *I have pledged my word for him.* But others, dear citizen, will suspect that his wish to remain secluded arises from the desire to conceal some culpable design from scrutinising eyes. Prevail on

him to mix a little more with society; you always had an attractive house. Why should not your drawing-room at Toulouse be as it was in Paris?"

My mother showed this letter to my father, who at length saw the danger of exciting towards us the attention of suspicious authority. My mother knew already almost everybody in Toulouse, and our home was speedily one of the gayest in the town. By a singular chance my mother found in Toulouse one of her cousins, from Corsica, whom I used to call my aunt. Mademoiselle Stephanopoli had married M. de St. Ange, a distinguished naval officer, who having quitted the service at the breaking out of the Revolution, purchased at St. Michel's de Lunez, near Castelnaudary, an ancient chateau, formerly belonging to the Polignacs. There he resided with his wife and seven lovely children. Madame de St. Ange and my mother were delighted to meet again. Mademoiselle Stephanopoli was, like my mother, the friend of Lætitia Bonaparte. "Well, Panoria," said she one day, "you see one of Lætitia Ramolini's sons has made his way in the world. That young man is likely to become a general of division. I confess that I should not have expected it, for Joseph was the one I thought would raise up the family. And the Archdeacon——"—"Oh! do not mention the Archdeacon," exclaimed my mother, "I was tired of hearing his name before we left Corsica."—"But, *figlia mia*," replied my aunt, who was as lively as a girl of fifteen, "though the Archdeacon is no favourite of yours he is nevertheless a person of great importance in the Bonaparte family. I think with him that Joseph is the flower of the flock. He is so handsome and so well bred. Napoleon is downright ugly, *figlia mia;* as stupid as a mule, and very ill-behaved—though he is your *protégé*, *figlia mia!*"—"Ah, cousin," replied my mother, "I see he has done something to offend you, and, like a true Corsican, you will not forgive him." My aunt laughed. The fact was, Bonaparte had offended her only a few months previously. I will relate how.

At that period almost every one endeavoured to

increase the little fortune they might have saved from the wreck. Few were such fools as to be too proud to do this. My aunt found that she might earn some money by transmitting to the ports of Provence goods for the Corsican market, and bartering them for others. Some time after the siege of Toulon she sent to Marseilles cloth and linen to be shipped for Calvi. Her agent, however, wrote to acquaint her that the English maintained the blockade with such vigilance that he was unable to effect the transmission of the goods. "Take my advice," added he; "and dispose of your goods either at Toulon, at Antibes, or at Nice. There are troops at those places, two-thirds of whom, to my knowledge, have not shirts to their backs. Your cloth is good in quality and reasonable in price;[1] therefore it will sell well. You know General Bonaparte; write to him, and you will, I make no doubt, realise fifty per cent profit."

My aunt saw that the project would answer; she therefore addressed a letter to Bonaparte, which she took care to write in Italian, sprinkled here and there with a few Corsican words, with the view of reminding him of his country and his friends. This done she sent the packet under the care of an old domestic of her father, who had settled in the environs of Marseilles.

This man was a Corsican, named Bartolomeo Peraldi. He knew all the Bonaparte family, and of course Napoleon among the rest. The General's epaulettes did not intimidate Peraldi, and having delivered to him the letter from the Signora Catalina, he seated himself without any ceremony. Though it was early in the morning, and in the midst of winter, Bonaparte was up and dressed, booted, spurred, and ready equipped to mount his horse.

Bartolomeo, who surveyed the general with a scrutinising eye, remarked that Bonaparte's countenance underwent a sensible change whilst he read Madame St. Ange's letter. First an ironical smile played over his features, then his forehead lowered into a frown, and, surveying Bartolomeo,

[1] It was made in the Chateau of Saint Michel; my aunt and cousins spun the hemp and the flax.

he said, "What is all this nonsense?" These words were spoken in French, and in so high a tone that it seemed he wished them to be heard by two officers who were in the next apartment. Bartolomeo perceived Bonaparte's design, and felt a little nettled. "*Signor Napoleone,*" he replied in Italian, though he could speak French very well, "*non capisco niente a tutto; voi sapete, che in Corsica noi altri poveri diavoli non parliamo che il nostro* patois, *come lo chiamano quì. Fatemi dunque il favore di parlare la nostra cara lingua.*"[1]

Bonaparte surveyed the man with a look of surprise. "I left Corsica too young to be able to express myself easily in Italian," said Napoleon, turning on his heel; "besides, I see no necessity to speak your *patois*, as you rightly term it, for Signora Catalina tells me in her letter that you have been living for fifteen years on the coast of Provence."—"*Si, Signor,*" replied Bartolomeo.—"Surely, then, you can speak French," said Bonaparte, with impatience. "What do you mean by this insolence, fellow?"

Peraldi was now a little confused, but speedily resuming his confidence, and putting on his red and blue bonnet, which he had taken off on his entrance, he addressed Bonaparte in the following words: "*Non è bisogno di tanto far la quadra, Signov Napoleoncino: chè penso bene che mi volete dar la burla di chiamarmi così. Ma basti! che risposta darò alla Signora Kalli?*"[2] Bonaparte darted at him an inquiring glance.—"*Si, signor; la Signora Catalina, la Signora Kalli, è medesima cosa. In somma, Madama di Saint-Ange. Cos' ho da dire?*"[3] "Know you the contents of this letter?" demanded the general, pointing to my aunt's epistle, which lay on the table at his side. Bartolomeo nodded assent. "Then," rejoined Bonaparte angrily, and in a very loud tone, "you are more

[1] "Signor Napoleon, I do not understand you. You know that in Corsica we poor devils speak only our *patois*, as you call it here. Do me then the favour to speak to me in our dear native tongue."

[2] "There is no need for all this jesting and calling me such names, M. Napoleoncino. Tell me what answer I am to take to the Signora Kalli."

[3] "Yes, sir, the Signora Catalina and the Signora Kalli are both the same. In short, Madame de Saint Ange. What am I to tell her?"

impudent than I thought you. Here," continued he, addressing the officers in the next room, "this fellow has brought me a packet from one of my countrywomen, who wants me to get some trumpery cloth sold to the Republic. It is true she allows me a commission. Here, pray read the letter, citizens;" so saying, he took my aunt's letter, to which there was attached a small bit of paper, with patterns of the cloth and linen, and their prices marked. "You see," continued he, "that she offers me the piece marked No. 2, as a bribe, and if she seduce me, it will not be, as you perceive, by the splendour of the present." The two young officers laughed immoderately when they looked on the pattern, which was coarse and brown, and scarely fit for soldiers' shirts. I cannot conceive what my poor aunt was thinking of when she offered such a present to Napoleon. "Begone," said he, angrily, to Bartolomeo; "it is lucky for you that you are only the bearer of this impudent message. Begone, I say."

"*Me nè vado, me nè vado. Benedetto Dio! Che fuoco! E perchè? perchè la brava Madama di Saint Ange gli mandò qualche povere misure di tela per farsi una mezza dozzine di camicci!*[1] *Eh!* I have seen the day, and not long ago either," continued he, all at once changing his language, and speaking in good French, "I have seen the day when the half of this piece of cloth would have been gladly accepted by your mother, General Bonaparte, to make shifts for your sisters, though now they have the finest that can be procured in Marseilles—and not much to the credit of one of them." These last words he muttered between his teeth and then withdrew.

Napoleon was afterwards sorry for having shown so much ill humour in this foolish affair. I am sure he never pardoned Bartolomeo Peraldi for the lesson he gave him before two officers, who, as they did not belong to his corps, conceived they had no reason to keep the secret.

[1] "I am going, I am going! Good God! what a piece of work; and all for what? Because good Madame de Saint Ange has sent him a few ells of cloth to make him half-a-dozen of shirts."

CHAPTER XVII.

The fair of Beaucaire—Atrocities committed in the south—Mutilated women—Short stay at Bordeaux—Decline of my father's health—Return to Paris—Our hotel Rue de la Loi—Domiciliary visit—The envoy of the section and Bonaparte—My father's illness—Bonaparte's daily calls on my parents—Commotions in Paris—The Convention and the Sections—The 13th Vendémiaire—Bonaparte at my mother's on the 14th, and their conversation—Death of my father.

TARASCON and Beaucaire are, as everybody knows, separated only by the Rhone, and the houses of the two towns line either bank of the river. On seeing those narrow streets, those houses with high Gothic gables, those windows with small sashes and close lattices, the irregular pavement formed of large flints from the river, you fancy yourself in the Middle Ages; for there is nothing about Beaucaire that reminds you of the age in which we are living.

The fair of Beaucaire is one of the most celebrated in Europe; it is on a par with those of Frankfort and Leipzig. Its originality is one of the causes that draw thither so many customers. The merchant of Mossoul and Bagdad there sets up his booth beside the manufacturer of London. The trader of Astracan repairs thither to deal with the weaver of Lyons; and the pearl-fisher of the coast of Coromandel does business with the jeweller of Paris, through the medium of the garlic merchant of Marseilles. This may appear extraordinary at first sight, but it is nevertheless a fact; and whoever has been to the fair of Beaucaire will recollect the immense heaps of garlic.[1]

[1] They are from fifteen to twenty feet high, and proportionably wide at the base.

The sum put into circulation for this commodity alone is estimated at upwards of six hundred thousand francs, or about twenty-four thousand pounds; at least so I have been assured by the inhabitants of the town.

Had I not been formerly at the fair of Beaucaire I could not say that I knew anything about it, for this year was the first since the Revolution had overthrown all the customs of this kind; accordingly, signs of it were to be seen in the singular arrangement of the shops and goods. From the fear with which they displayed their stuffs and exhibited their precious stones you would have imagined that they dreaded a reaction, and were afraid lest their merchandise should become the property of others without the formality of a sale.

The south was actually in such a state as to excite great uneasiness in those who were merely travelling through it, and who could not hope for any aid from justice and the laws, since both were then absolutely powerless, in case they were attacked by one of those unruly parties which drenched the earth with blood by their quarrels and combats, and by assassinations. These parties assumed all colours; all watchwords were alike to them, and the most atrocious cruelty, the most refined horrors, if I may be allowed the expression, presided over these acts of cannibals, under pretext of avenging the province for the evils inflicted by the days of terror. They fancied that with blood they could wipe away blood: strange baptism! Women, aged men, and children, had been thrown from the tops of the towers of the castles of Tarascon. In a cavity formed by the rocks, a little below the town of Beaucaire, we saw the mutilated bodies of two women, whom the current had carried into that cavern. There they remained, and the wind at times wafted from the spot a stench that made one sick at heart.

We stopped at Beaucaire no longer than was necessary to see the singular assemblage which the fair brought together. On this occasion, to my great regret, the *tarasque* was not paraded about as usual; it was justly apprehended that, at a moment when popular effervescence

had reached the highest pitch, this procession might be attended with fatal consequences. The precise origin of the *tarasque* is not known, and the manner in which it is conducted throws no light upon this ceremony; still, like the beast of the Gevaudan, it must have had for its primary cause the destruction of some mischievous and dangerous animal. The remembrance of it is thus perpetuated at Beaucaire: an immense machine of wicker-work, covered with oilcloth, and held together by large strong hoops, is shaped like a dragon, or some other fantastic beast; this machine, from twenty to twenty-five feet long, is filled by a party of young men appointed by the town, when the ceremony of the *tarasque* is decided upon. It was an honour to be admitted into this number. When they were in this strange sort of vehicle they set off, and, darting away at full speed, run about the town, upsetting everything before them. Woe to the blind and the slow-motioned whom they encounter—they are sure to be thrown down. I saw this exhibition a few years afterwards, and I must confess that I fancied myself among a people of maniacs. It is seldom that it is not productive of serious accidents.

On leaving Beaucaire we returned to Bordeaux. The news which my mother received from my father gave us so much uneasiness as to prevent our compliance with the wishes of several of our friends, who earnestly begged us to go to Marseilles, to Avignon, and to Arles. We returned by the same road we had come, stopping only at Toulouse and Castlenaudary, whence we proceeded to my aunt St. Ange. We found her still a model for her sex; her virtue had so respectable a character that you were forced to admire it, and this feeling was experienced by all who approached her. My mother, as I have observed, was tenderly attached to her; but, as she herself said, laughingly, she could never come up to her, if she must, for that purpose, rise at four in the morning, and eat leg of goose more than four times a year. "If your virtue could permit you to rise at nine, and not eat so much salt, I could accommodate myself to it well enough,

cousin; if you will agree to that I will come hither with Loulou, and we will be your best workpeople."—"*Altro, altro, figlia mia,*" replied my aunt, lifting my mother as she would have taken up a feather. "Let us each go on in our own way."

Dear and respectable woman! I saw her subsequently, when I dwelt in a palace. "Are you happier now than when you went with your cousins to strip the mulberry-trees on St. Michel's hill?" asked she, on seeing me come home at five o'clock to dress in haste, having scarcely time to kiss my children, and get into my carriage again, to perform what were called duties. I had a place at court.

On leaving St. Michel de Lunez we proceeded to Bordeaux. My father awaited us at the hotel Fumele, where he had provided apartments for us. Prepared as we were by the accounts of Laudois and M. Emilhaud for the change in my father, we were shocked on seeing him. His paleness, his emaciation, his dim eyes, and his tremulous voice, everything about him indicated a person struck by death. His character had retained that gloomy and melancholy tinge which prevailed in it at Toulouse. The extreme solitude in which he had constantly persisted in living had proved fatal to him.

Our meeting dispelled for a few hours that sullen reverie in which he was always plunged; but he soon relapsed, and seemed to attach no importance to the flight of Salicetti; but, after listening to our narrative of the manner in which we had saved him, he smiled with most expressive bitterness, and said to my mother: "You could do no less than offer him everything; it was not fit that he should accept, still less ask for anything." When he was informed of the conduct of Bonaparte, it made such an impression upon him that he rose from his chair and paced the room several times without uttering a word, but with visible emotion. At length he returned to his seat, and taking my mother by the hand, "My dear friend," said he, "this conduct is admirable." This admission was a great deal for my father; for I never knew a

person more sparing of commendation. "I said the same thing to Salicetti," said my mother, "and what answer do you think he gave me? 'Would you then have had him deliver me up?' said he to me contemptuously." My father shrugged his shoulders. "I have almost always seen," he said, "that persons who regard noble and generous conduct in others as the simplest thing in the world, were themselves the most incapable of it. Such trials it is difficult to explain, and still more to judge of. The man who has no wrong to revenge cannot put himself in the place of another who has been utterly ruined by one whose fate is in his hands. It is very easy to say, when quietly seated in one's arm-chair, *You think that generous, do you? upon my word I cannot tell why. Now I maintain that, had he acted otherwise, he must have been a wretch.* People talk thus, aloof from passions and resentments, without considering that it is a great, a very great virtue to forgive an injury."

My parents, having finished all their business, left Bordeaux at the beginning of September 1795, and directed their course towards Paris with the intention of settling there again. We arrived the 4th of the same month, and alighted at the hotel l'Autriche, Rue de la Loi. My brother hastened to join us as soon as he knew of our arrival. He was deeply grieved on perceiving the state of my poor father, who was so fatigued with the journey as to be almost dying when we reached Paris. M. Duchannois was then our physician. He was sent for; he required a consultation. Two days afterwards my poor father was very ill. A dangerous fever was superadded to his previous sufferings. This was too much.

Bonaparte, apprised by my brother, came immediately to see us. He appeared to be affected by the state of my father, who, though in great pain, insisted on seeing him. He came every day; and in the morning he sent or called himself to inquire how he had passed the night. I cannot recollect his conduct at that period without sincere gratitude. He informed us that Paris was in such

a state as must necessarily lead to a convulsion. The Convention, by incessantly repeating to the people that it was their master, had taught them the answer which they now made it in their turn. The sections were, if not in open, at least almost avowed insurrection. The section Lepelletier, wherein we resided, was the most turbulent, and in fact the most to be dreaded; its orators did not scruple to deliver the most incendiary speeches. They asserted that the power of the assembled people was above the laws. "Matters are getting from bad to worse," said Bonaparte; "the counter-revolution will shortly break forth, and it will at the same time become the source of disasters."

As I have said, he came every day; he dined with us and passed the evening in the drawing-room, talking in a low tone beside the easy-chair of my mother, who, worn out with fatigue, dozed for a few moments to recruit her strength, for she never quitted my father's pillow. I recollect, that, one evening, my father being very ill, my mother was weeping and in great tribulation. It was ten o'clock. At that time it was impossible to induce any of the servants of the hotel to go out after nine. Bonaparte said nothing. He ran downstairs and posted away to Duchannois, whom he brought back with him, in spite of his objections. The weather was dreadful; the rain poured in torrents. Bonaparte had not been able to meet with a hackney-coach to go to M. Duchannois; he was wet through. Yes, indeed, at that period Bonaparte had a heart susceptible of attachment!

Meanwhile we became more and more alarmed every day by the dangers which manifested themselves around us. Paris rang with the tumult of the factions, which drew the sword, and each hoisted its standard. Against the Convention, then the only real authority, were arrayed the sections, which for some days past had declared war against it. Our section in particular was in full insurrection. Paris resembled a garrison town. The sections had a hostile and even military attitude. At night we heard the sentries calling to and answering one another,

as in a besieged town; the strictest search was made for arms and ammunition; and the section was furnished with lists of all the men capable of bearing arms. This measure even occasioned a distressing scene of which our house was the theatre.

On the 2d of October, at two in the afternoon, my father was dozing a little. He had been much exhausted from the effects of an emetic, and we had taken the greatest precautions to prevent his being disturbed by any noise. The doors were all at once thrown open, and three men, talking loudly, stamping with their feet to make some one hear, and having the manners of porters, entered the apartment, followed rather than conducted by the master of the hotel, who was a worthy excellent man. "What a deal of ceremony!" exclaimed one of these wretches with horrid oaths; "and why cannot we go into this room?"—"Because there is a sick person in it," said my mother, coming forward to meet him, and shutting the double door of my father's bedroom, for it was necessary to spare him any emotion of this kind. "And who is this sick person?" inquired the same man, with an inflexion of voice which showed that he did not believe a word that was said. "My husband."—"Your husband. And why," said he, turning over the leaves of a stitched book which he carried with him, "has not your husband given in his name to the section? He is in fact inserted in the list of arrivals at the hotel, but we have not seen him. What is the meaning of this conduct, at a moment when the nation needs all its defenders?"—"And pray who are you," asked my mother, "who come thus to annoy my family? Do you belong to the Convention?" —"I have probably sufficient authority to talk to you as I do; but answer my question, and tell me why your husband has not been to the section?"

My mother was going to cut him short when the master of the hotel made her a sign which restrained her. "My husband was so ill on his arrival," replied she, "that he took to his bed immediately, as the master of the house can certify." The keeper of the hotel confirmed my

mother's assertion, adding some civil words. The man of the section then looked at the book. "Why, I see," said he, "that he arrived on the 28th of Fructidor (September 15), that is nineteen days ago. What sort of illness is it? I should have had time to die and come to life again three times over; but that is nothing to the point; where is this citizen Permon? I must see him."—"I have already told you that he is ill, citizen."—"It is no time to be ill, when the country itself is in danger. Come, open the door."—"You are either a madman or a monster," exclaimed my mother, placing herself before the door of my father's room. "Wretch, stir not a step farther, or the consequences be upon your own head."

At this sharp address the sectionary man receded a few steps: my mother's look must have frightened him at least as much as he had done her. While he hesitated, my mother told me in Greek to go immediately through the other room to my father, and endeavour to counteract the effect which this noise must have made upon him. I found my father much disturbed at the tumult which he had heard; the very cries of the sentries, after dark, had already alarmed him. The nurse, who had not dared to leave him, told me that for above a quarter of an hour he had been wanting to know what this noise was about. I told him that it was a man belonging to the section, who had come to set him down in the lists of the National Guard, but that on being informed of his illness he had desisted. I was induced to say so, because I heard no further altercation. My father looked steadfastly at me. "Is that quite true?" he asked. Knowing that a true account of this scene would be liable to cause a fatal crisis I answered in the affirmative, and my mother's maid, who heard the whole, came in and supported me. My father did not believe it. I heard him utter the words, "Wretches! my poor country!" At length he asked for my mother. I went to fetch her, but in what a state did I find her!

For some years past my mother had been subject to nervous paroxysms, of a character the more alarming,

inasmuch as she never lost her consciousness, but continued in a dreadfully convulsed state for one or two hours. At such time she disliked to have anybody about her. On reaching the drawing-room I found her all in tears, and in one of the most violent spasms. General Bonaparte was with her, endeavouring to soothe her: he would not call any one for fear of alarming my father. I hastened to bring a draught, which my mother always took in these fits, and which immediately calmed her. I rubbed her hands, I took her to the fire, and she was soon able to go to my father, who began to be extremely uneasy because she did not come.

General Bonaparte told me that on his arrival he found her on the point of attacking the assistant of the section, to prevent his entering my father's chamber: fortunately, there was a double door. "I should be glad to spare your mother such scenes," said he. "I have not much influence; nevertheless, when I leave you, I will go myself to the section; I will see the president, if possible, and settle the business at once. Paris is in a violent convulsion, especially since this morning. It is necessary to be very cautious in everything one does and in all one says. Your brother must not go out any more. Attend to all this, Mademoiselle Laurette, for your poor mamma is in a sad state."

This was a dreadful night for my father. The disease made rapid progress, increased as it was by all that he heard, and that we could not keep from his knowledge. The next morning the drums were beat in the section Lepelletier: it was impossible for us to deceive him in regard to that sound, with which he was but too well acquainted; and when M. Duchannois called to see him he no longer concealed from us the danger of his situation.

My poor father perceived it before M. Duchannois had uttered a word: no doubt he felt it too. Be this as it may, he desired to see M. Brunetière, and M. Renaudot, his notary. They were sent for. The streets were already very unsafe, and those gentlemen were not to be

found. M. Brunetière was not in Paris, and M. Renaudot was from home. The tumult became very great at dusk: the theatres were nevertheless open. Indeed, we are a nation of lunatics!

On the morning of the 12th, Bonaparte, who had called according to custom, appeared to be lost in thought: he went out, came back, went out again, and again returned when we were at our dessert. I recollect that he ate a bunch of grapes, and took a large cup of coffee. "I breakfasted very late," said he, "at ——.[1] They talked politics there till I was quite tired of the subject. I will try to learn the news, and if I hear anything interesting I will come and tell you." We did not see him again. The night was stormy, especially in our section. The whole Rue de la Loi was studded with bayonets. General d'Agneau, who commanded the sections, had called to see some one in the next house to ours, and one of the officers who were with him had expressed the most hostile disposition. Barricades were already set up in our street, but some officers of the National Guard ordered them to be removed. The National Guard was the principal force of the sections. Its grenadiers and its chasseurs, shopkeepers, and a few private individuals belonging to the party, these were the elements opposed to the troops of the line commanded by experienced generals such as Brune, Berruyer, Montchoisy, Verdier, and lastly Bonaparte.

On the morning of the 13th my father was very ill. It was impossible to expect M. Duchannois; our gratitude was the more ardent when we saw him arrive. He stayed nearly an hour with us: in anticipation of what might happen he left directions as to what was to be done in case he should be out of the way when wanted; but he did not conceal from my brother and myself the effect which the events in preparation were likely to have on our unfortunate father. "A few days ago," said he, "I began to have fresh hopes; but the affair of the day before yesterday, of which he was informed by his nurse

[1] I believe it was at Bourrienne's, but I am not sure.

(the silly creature had related it to him after my departure, for the purpose of diverting his mind), has brought on the fever again with redoubled violence. I dare not indulge the hope that he will be insensible to the commotion about to take place."

For some hours we flattered ourselves that matters would be adjusted between the Convention and the rebels; but, about half-past four the firing of cannon began. Scarcely was the first discharge heard before it was answered from all quarters. The effect on my poor father was terrible and immediate. He gave a piercing shriek, called for assistance, and was seized with the most violent delirium. To no purpose did we administer the draughts prescribed for him by M. Duchannois. All the scenes of the Revolution passed in review before him, and every discharge that he heard was a blow as if it struck him personally. What a day! what an evening! what a night! Every pane of glass was broken in pieces. Towards evening the section fell back upon our quarter: the fighting was continued almost under our windows; but when it had reached Saint Roch, and particularly the Théâtre de la République, we imagined that the house was tumbling about our ears.

My father was in the agonies of death: he cried aloud; he wept. Never, no never, shall I suffer what I did during that terrible night! When we heard barricades forming in the Rue de la Loi we gave ourselves up for lost. Patrols passed to and fro in all directions: they belonged to all parties; for in truth on that disastrous day there were more than two. We were forced to tell my father all. We had at first thought of passing it off as a festival; as salutes of rejoicing. As he was exceedingly debilitated by his long and painful illness we should perhaps have made him believe this but for the indiscretion of his nurse: in short, he knew all. I loved my father with extreme affection; I adored my mother. I saw one expiring from the effect of the thunders of the cannon, while the other, extended on the foot of his deathbed, seemed ready to follow him.

Next day tranquillity was restored, we were told, in Paris. It was then that we could perceive the havoc which a few hours had made in the condition of my father. Was tranquillity possible there? Nothing could redeem the life destroyed. M. Duchannois came in the morning. My father wished to speak to him alone. He then desired my mother to be sent in. Suddenly I heard a violent scream. I ran to my father's chamber: my mother was in one of her most dreadful nervous paroxysms. She motioned to me to call Josephine, her maid, to take her away. Her face, always so beautiful, was quite distorted. Till that day she had flattered herself: her hopes had just been utterly destroyed.

I can scarcely give any acccount of the 14th. My father's state, which hourly grew worse, left me no other fuculty than that of suffering and trying to impart a little fortitude to my poor mother. Towards evening Bonaparte came for a moment; he found me dissolved in tears. When he learned the cause his cheerful and open countenance suddenly changed. "I should like to see Madame Permon," said he. I was going to fetch my mother, who entered at that moment; she knew no more than I how important a part Bonaparte had played on that great day. "Oh!" said my mother weeping, "they have killed him. You, Napoleon, can feel for my distress. Do you recollect that, on the first of Prairial, when you came to sup with me, you told me that you had just prevented Barras from bombarding Paris? Do you recollect it? For my part," continued she, "I have not forgotten it."

I never knew what effect this address had on Bonaparte; many persons have alleged that he always regretted that day. Be this as it may, he was exceedingly kind to my mother in these moments of affliction, though himself in circumstances that could not but outweigh all other interests: he was like a son, like a brother.

My poor father languished for two more days. We lost him on the 17th of Vendémiaire.[1] To me he was

[1] 8th of October 1795.

more than a father: he was a friend, such as friendship very rarely furnishes,—indulgent without weakness. My brother was overwhelmed with grief. He too had lost a friend still young in my father. He had been educated by him, and in fact owed him a large debt of gratitude for having been so brought up. As for my mother, she was long inconsolable, in the real signification of the word; she had that affection for my father which causes one to mourn sincerely the loss of the person who has been the object of it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

My mother's house in the Chaussée d'Antin—Great change in the situation of Bonaparte—Ammunition Bread—Dreadful dearth—Charities bestowed by Bonaparte—The dead child, and the slater's widow—Comparison between former fashions and those of the Republic.

MY brother, as soon as he was certain of our definitive return to Paris, had set about seeking a house where we could all live together, and where we might be able to accommodate my sister when she should come to Paris. All these plans were destined to be cruelly frustrated. As soon as our new habitation was ready my mother hastened to leave the Hotel de l'Autriche, to escape the painful recollections which are inseparable from a residence in a place where a distressing event has recently occurred. The house to which we removed was situated in the Chaussée d'Antin; it was the small hotel, or rather the small house (everybody knows that all the houses in this part of the Chaussée d'Antin were nothing more, anterior to the Revolution) of M. de Varnachan, formerly a farmer-general of taxes; it was commodious, and its small appearance was a recommendation at a time when all were striving to make as little show as possible, and to conceal their wealth.

We now learned with astonishment the good fortune which had befallen Bonaparte. My mother, absorbed by her grief, had not a thought to bestow on any singularity which the conduct of the young general might present when compared with his own words; she even saw him again without having the will to remind him of it. For

the rest, a great change had taken place in Bonaparte, and the change in regard to attention to his person was not the least remarkable. One of the things to which my mother had a particular dislike was the smell of wet dirty boots put to the fire to dry; to her this smell was so disgusting that she frequently left the room, and did not return till the boots had been thoroughly dried and removed from the fire; but this was followed by another, namely, the creaking noise produced by the dry sole, to which I have also a great antipathy. Now, in those disastrous times when it was a matter of luxury to ride in a hackney-coach, it may easily be conceived that those who had but sufficient to pay the price of a dinner did not take great delight in splashing others, but retained sufficient philosophy to soil their shoes or boots by walking. My mother admitted the justice of the remark, but she nevertheless held her perfumed handkerchief to her nose whenever Bonaparte placed his little feet upon the fender. He at length perceived this, and, being at that time exceedingly afraid of displeasing my mother, he would prevail upon our maid to brush his boots before he came in. These details, which are nothing in themselves, and present no remarkable feature, become interesting when we recollect the man to whom they relate.

After the 13th of Vendémiaire (4th October), soiled boots were out of the question. Bonaparte never went out but in a handsome carriage, and he lived in a very respectable house, Rue des Capucines.[1] In short he had become an important, a necessary personage; and all without antecedent, without noise, as if by magic; he came every day to see us, with the same kindness and the same familiarity: sometimes, but very rarely, he brought along with him one of his aides-de-camp, either Junot or Muiron; at other times his uncle Fesch, a man

[1] M. de Bourrienne is mistaken. The house, which was long the head-quarters of the division, is by the side of the house which he mentions in the Rue des Capucines. Marshal Mortier lodged there while he commanded the division.

of the mildest manners and most even temper. One of the persons who came very often with Bonaparte was named Chauvet. I do not recollect precisely what he was, but this I know that Bonaparte was very fond of him, and that he was a man of gentle disposition and very ordinary conversation.

At this period famine prevailed in Paris in a greater degree than anywhere else: there was a real want of bread; and other kinds of provisions began no longer to find their way to the city. This was the effect of a plan of insurrection. The distress was dreadful. The discredit of the assignats increased with the general misery. Labouring people ceased to work, and died in their garrets, or went and joined the bands of robbers and vagabonds which began to collect in the provinces. In Paris itself we were not free from them.

Bonaparte was at that time of great assistance to us. We had white bread for our own consumption; but our servants had only that of the section, and this was unwholesome food; it was not eatable. Bonaparte sent us daily some ammunition loaves, which we very often ate with great pleasure. I know not what Madame de Bourrienne means when she talks of a circumstance connected with a loaf of this sort, which happened at her house; but this I can affirm, because Bonaparte thought fit to associate me with himself in the good which he did, that at the period in question he saved more than a hundred families from perishing. He caused wood and bread to be distributed among them at their own homes: this his situation enabled him to do. I have been charged by him to give these bounties to more than ten unfortunate families who were starving. Most of them lived in the Rue Saint Nicolas, very near our house. That street was then inhabited only by the most indigent people: whoever has not ascended to their garrets can have no conception of real wretchedness.

One day, when Bonaparte came to dine with my mother, he was stopped on alighting from his carriage

by a woman who held a dead infant in her arms. It was the youngest of her six children. Her husband, a slater by trade, had been accidentally killed, three months before, while at work on the roof of the Tuileries. Nearly two months' wages were due to him. His widow could not obtain payment. She suckled, but grief, and afterwards want, had dried up her milk. Her poor little infant had just expired; it was not yet cold. She saw a man, whose dress was covered with gold, alight at our door almost every day, and came to ask him for bread, "that her other children might not share the fate of the youngest," she said; "and if nobody will give me anything, I must even take them all five and drown myself with them."

This was not an unmeaning expression, for suicides were then daily occurrences; indeed, nothing was talked of but tragic deaths. Be this as it may, Bonaparte that day came into my mother's with a look of sadness, which he retained all dinner-time. He had, for the moment, given a few assignats to the unhappy woman. After we had left the table he begged my mother to cause some inquiry to be made concerning her. I undertook the office. All she said was true; and, moreover, this poor mother was an honest and virtuous woman. Bonaparte, in the first place, obtained payment of the arrears due to her husband, and a little pension was afterwards granted to her. Her name was Marianne Huvé. She lived for a long time near our house. She had four girls, whom she brought up like a good mother. Two of them frequently came to do needlework for us: they always expressed the most profound gratitude for the *General*, as they called him. If I have been so particular in this story, which is of little importance in itself, it is for the purpose of exhibiting this fact in opposition to that recorded by Madame Bourrienne, with reference to a dinner at her house, at which Bonaparte and his brother Louis were present.

I shall not draw the portrait of Bonaparte in this

place: I shall describe him by and by as I have seen him. At that time he was not a mysterious being to any one: therefore I shall speak of him apart from all influence and from all prejudice. For the rest, there were, in my opinion, two quite distinct persons in him; and I hope to make the reader comprehend and adopt my way of thinking on this point. But to proceed.

It was some time before we were quite settled. My mother was quiet enough when she was in furnished lodgings, and a mere bird of passage, as it were, in a town; but when a permanent establishment was in question she became of all women the most difficult to please. She had formed a plan for furnishing her house, half Asiatic, half French, which was the most delightful of inventions. She had already written to Leghorn for the carpets. Notwithstanding my youth my brother talked to me on a subject which could no longer be put off. This was our situation: it was frightful. The seals were removed; my father's papers were examined; nothing was found. My father had left absolutely no money. "Left nothing!" said I to my brother; "and the money carried to England?"—"There is no memorandum of it, no traces whatever. My father, since he came to Bordeaux, always paid for everything; he had money for current expenses. On removing to Paris he did not say a word to Brunetière. My mother, as you well know, never talked to him about money matters. As for me, if he said nothing about them in England, he was not more communicative here." My mother was my first thought. "Good God! Albert," said I, "she will not survive it: this state of destitution will put an end to her life!"

My brother and I then agreed to conceal from my mother, at least for some time, the dreadful state of our affairs. We had still something in the Funds and some ready money. My brother had also some of his own, given to him by my father, that he might make the most of it. At that period everybody tried this method

of making money. "Bonaparte is attached to us," said my brother; "he will get me an appointment. All that I earn shall be for my mother and you; but, for the present, let us conceal from her what has happened; she has no need of new afflictions."

I have already said that I had had no childhood: a new life of surprising occupations, very different from those which ought to have enlivened my youth, now opened before me. It is impossible to form an accurate notion of what I went through from the death of my father to the day of my marriage. All children are fond of their mother. Who is there but feels affection for her who gave him life? If any such exist they are unnatural monsters! But there is a more tender, a more exalted sentiment, and it was this that my brother and I felt for my mother. We adored her, in the literal signification of the word: we paid her all sorts of delicate attentions, which we took delight in devising. We wished to spare her every trouble, every uneasiness; we rejoiced at her joy, we sorrowed at her sorrow.

Brought up in Corsica, ignorant even of the existence of the articles of luxury which then belonged to the female toilet, my mother was in a sort of intoxication at the time of her coming to France. My father, who was dotingly fond of her, experienced that high delight which is felt in bestowing on the woman one loves all that can flatter her taste and inclinations. He enjoyed her surprises as much as she did herself, and studied to multiply them. She lived, therefore, in a continual enchantment, especially as my father spared her the trouble of superintending the household: it was he who managed everything: as for her, he only wished she might amuse herself. On her arrival in France her ignorance of the language and customs of the country rendered her unfit to undertake the duties of mistress of a house: indeed, she was disqualified for them by habit.

When the political troubles broke out, and my father proposed to place his fortune beyond the reach of danger,

he spoke to my mother, in confidence, on the subject. My mother received the communication in like manner, without comprehending anything of the matter; only, at my father's death she made sure that, after the payment of my sister's dowry, we should have a decent fortune left; but as she had brought no dowry herself, she did not expect any share in the division of the property. "My children," said she to us, "I had nothing when your father married me; to him I owe everything; of course, all is yours. Only," added she, with her winning smile, holding out her arms to us, "you will give me a place by your fireside."

It was no very easy matter to complete my mother's establishment. She would not have thought herself fitly and properly lodged had she not possessed a number of accessories unknown at the present day, notwithstanding the catalogue of gewgaws which people agree to call curiosities. Removed to France at the conclusion of the reign of Louis XV., my mother had received a new existence amidst numberless luxuries, which had become for her wants of a second nature. Never had the French been more inventive than at that period: never had all sorts of gratifications of sense been so multiplied, in order to surround woman with their refined elegance. We fancy that we have made improvements in this way, and we are egregiously mistaken: a lady who had an income of forty thousand livres fifty years ago, lived better than one at the present day who expends two hundred thousand. All that she then had about her cannot be enumerated: there was a profusion of charming trifles, the very uses of which are lost, and for which we have no substitutes. The establishment of a lady of fashion never comprised fewer than two *femmes-de-chambre*, and almost always a valet-de-chambre for indoor service. A bath was indispensable, for an elegant woman did not pass two days without bathing; and then there were perfumes in abundance: the finest cambrics, the most costly laces for every season were on the toilet, or in the amber-scented

baskets, in which the articles requisite for the toilet of a wealthy female were in the first instance deposited. This folly extended to everything. The furnishing also constituted a material item in the expenses of a woman. The apartments were expected to be very cool, very fragrant with flowers in summer and very close and warm in winter. As soon as the cold weather set in, Aubusson carpets, several inches thick, were laid down. A lady, on retiring at night to her bedchamber, found it warmed by a large fire; long draperies fell before the double windows; and the bed, surrounded by thick and ample curtains, was an asylum where she might prolong her night, without danger of having her slumbers broken by the return of day.

The same was the case in regard to articles of common use. The plate, porcelain, linen, were all convenient, and made for the use of people who were connoisseurs in them. The forms were less pleasing to the eye, certainly, but what a difference! For the rest, the experience of every day serves to confirm my opinion: everything belonging to the last century is again coming into favour, and will, I hope, soon supersede all those Grecian and Roman fashions, which might be very suitable for people living under the beautiful sky of Messina and Rome, but do not harmonise with our gray atmosphere, and our cold north-east wind, which is pleased to blow for nine months in the year.

It has been alleged that everything has been simplified, that every article has been placed more within the reach of persons of all classes. That is true in one sense; that is to say, our grocer shall have muslin curtains and gilt rods to his windows, and his wife shall have a silk cloak like ours, because that silk is become so slight and so cheap that everybody can afford it; but it does not keep any one warm. All other kinds of stuff are in the same predicament. Don't tell me, "So much the better!—a proof of equality." By no means. Equality is no more here than it is in England, than it is in America, than it is

anywhere, since it cannot exist. In consequence, you will have bad taffeta, bad satin, bad velvet, and that is all.

"But, see how comfortable!" say the people, who admire the last chair made by their cabinetmaker, as they do the last of the fourteen or fifteen constitutions which have been given to us during the last thirty years; and they fancy they have said everything in that word, the meaning of which sometimes they do not understand. Indeed, among all the articles to which that word is applied, a very small number justify the application. All that nowadays deserves it is copied from the fashions of the times of Louis XV., for that period was the true reign of refined sensuality. Under Louis XVI. the Queen rode about on asses, and wore short muslin robes. Experience convinced her that a Queen ought not to ride upon an ass; consequently this was not a fashion to be followed. The French people, in becoming fraternised, ceased to have clean hands; I know not why. They no longer liked good things. Soft, capacious, easy chairs, thick carpets, wide and long draperies, down pillows, all the refinements of the culinary art, which no other nation in Europe but ourselves know anything about, were good for nothing but to send us to prison; and, because we lived in a fine hotel, situated at the bottom of a courtyard, in order to escape the odious noise and stench of the street, we had our throats cut. This method of treating good manners somewhat disgusted people with them. For some time, therefore, they were abandoned; but now people do justice to bad taste, and those Grecian chairs which break your arms, and those sofas which smell of the stable, because they are stuffed with hay, are consigned to the lumber-room.

It might be objected, "You have not lived in the time of Louis XV.; why, then, do you think his reign so admirable?"—True: I have not even seen so much of Louis XVIth's as to be worth mentioning; but permit me to observe that my family, and my mother in par-

ticular, had preserved all the traditions with religious accuracy. Faithful servants had saved from the wreck a great number of delightful things, amidst which I was brought up. When my mother was settled in her new habitation she took delight in arranging every object, and in furnishing her bedroom and drawing-room according to her own fancy. In vain did her upholsterer recommend kerseymere and muslin; she told him that she did not wish to look like the wife of a contractor to the Republic, who made up into furniture the bad cloth which he had not been able to dispose of.

I recollect that long after this time much was said in Paris of a house which Bertaud, I believe, had just fitted up. It was, we were told, the wonder of wonders. People went to see it without being known to the owner of the house. My mother, who was annoyed by this uproar, one day told Admiral Magon, one of our most intimate friends, that she was determined to go and see the house in question. The owner was his banker; the thing, therefore, was easy. We chose a day when the beautiful mistress was absent, and the admiral escorted us. I was lost in astonishment; and I must confess that I admired both the taste and arrangement of all I saw; but my mother had no mercy. She looked round the apartment at those things which constitute the charm of our dwellings, and which are strewed in profuse disorder over the furniture of the room. The value of these objects ought to make you forgive their presence. Thus a Chinese basket of ivory will contain female work. Scissors and thimbles will lie beside it. These must be of gold, surrounded with enamel, or fine pearls. "Rich smelling-bottles, beautiful *nécessaires*, ought all to be here," said my mother. "Of course this room is never inhabited."

When we had reached home, I was astonished, on finding myself in our own convenient habitation, I did not regret the fairy palace which I had just seen. As for my mother, it was never possible to make her confess that

this house was an admirable thing. "It is a pretty nick-nack, and that is all," she would reply. But when she was told what it had cost, she was ready to jump out of her easy chair.

"I would fit up twenty houses like that," cried she, "and you should see what a difference there would be. What matters it to luxury, ornament, and convenience, to all those things indispensable in the furnishing and fitting-up of a habitation, that the furniture of a salon, in which you never live, should be of rosewood or mahogany? Would it not be better if the money which those arm-chairs have cost had been employed in giving them a richer cover and a new shape, since they must have one, and in rendering them more commodious, and not likely to break one's arms?"

CHAPTER XIX.

My mother's mourning—Decline of her health—A box at the Feydeau prescribed by the physician—Bonaparte accompanies my mother to the play—Singular overtures of Bonaparte to my mother—He proposes three marriages between the two families—My mother refuses to marry Bonaparte—Stephanopoli, a relative of my mother's—Sharp altercation between my mother and Bonaparte—Definitive rupture—Marriage of Bonaparte—He is appointed to the command of the army of Italy.

MY mother's mourning was deep: etiquette required absolute solitude, which preyed daily more and more upon her naturally delicate health. M. Duchannois told her one day that, in the circumstances in which she was placed, decorum might require her not to go into company, but that she ought to take some amusement. In consequence, he recommended her to hire a box at one of the theatres, and to go to it in the most profound incognito; she might listen to good music, surrounded by friends; and their attentions, and her soul wrapt in a soft lethargy, would cause her to forget her griefs for a few hours at least. My mother accordingly took a box at the Feydeau, where she passed an hour or two every evening. Bonaparte never missed coming thither. He was not fond of French music, and, to confess the truth, the notes of Madame Scio and Gaveaux-Bouche[1] were not calculated to give him a liking for it.

About this time Bonaparte had a strange conference with my mother, so strange indeed that even to this day I cannot suppress a smile whenever I think of it. One day Bonaparte told my mother that he had to pro-

[1] He had a very wide mouth, and was so called to distinguish him from Gavaudan.

pose a marriage which should unite the two families. "It is," added he, "between Paulette and Permon. Permon has some fortune." (It was not then known that we had found nothing at my father's death.) "My sister has nothing, but I am in a condition to obtain much for those belonging to me, and I can get a good place for her husband. This alliance would make me happy. You know what a pretty girl my sister is. My mother is your friend. Come, say Yes, and the business shall be settled." My mother said neither yes nor no; she replied that my brother was his own master, that she should not influence him either one way or the other, and that all depended on his own will.

Bonaparte confessed that Permon was so remarkable a young man that, though only twenty-five, he had maturity and abilities which would qualify him for public employments. Thus far what General Bonaparte said was natural and suitable. It related to a match between a young female of sixteen and a young man of twenty-five. This young man was supposed to possess an income of ten thousand livres; he had an agreeable person; painted like Vernet, whose pupil he was; played on the harp much better than Krumpholtz, his master; spoke English, Italian, and modern Greek, as well as French; wrote verses like an angel; transacted business with a facility and intelligence which distinguished him among all those who were connected with him in the army of the South. Such was the man whom Bonaparte demanded for his sister, a beautiful creature, it is true, and a good girl, but nothing more. To all that I have just said of my brother might be added that he was the best of sons, exemplary in his duties as a member of society, as well as in those of a friend, a brother, and a kinsman. I shall perhaps be charged with letting my heart run away with my pen, and listening too much to its suggestions. No, I am not swayed by prejudice; what I say of M. Permon is nothing but the strictest and most scrupulous truth. There are still left many of his friends, of his relatives, to whom he was a great benefactor; let them

answer the appeal of such as have not known him, and who wish to learn whether my eulogy of him is true; and let them do it without being restrained by that silly and ridiculous vanity, which frequently prevents people from acknowledging, "There is the man to whom I owe everything!"

Such, then, was my brother when Bonaparte proposed to my mother a match between him and Mademoiselle Pauline Bonaparte, called by her family and all her friends, *Pretty Paulette.* This proposal he followed up by the plan of a second alliance between me and Louis or Jerome. "Jerome is younger than Laurette," said my mother, laughing. "Indeed, my dear Napoleon, you are acting the high-priest to-day; you are marrying everybody, even children." Bonaparte laughed too, but with an air of embarrasment. He admitted that when he got up that morning a marriage-breeze had blown upon him; and, to prove it, he added, kissing my mother's hand, that he had made up his mind to ask her to commence the union of the two families by a marriage between him and herself, as soon as a regard to decency would permit.

My mother has frequently related to me this extraordinary scene, so that I am as well acquainted with it as if I had been the principal actress in it. She eyed Bonaparte for some seconds with an astonishment bordering upon stupefaction; and then burst into so hearty a laugh that we heard her in the next room, where there were three or four of us. Bonaparte was at first much vexed at this manner of receiving a proposal which appeared to him quite natural. My mother, who perceived it, hastened to explain herself; and told him that it was she, on the contrary, who in this affair played, at least in her own eyes, a perfectly ridiculous part. "My dear Napoleon," said she, when she had done laughing, "let us talk seriously. You fancy you are acquainted with my age. The truth is, you know nothing about it. I shall not tell it you, because it is one of my little weaknesses. I shall merely say that I am old enough to be not only your mother, but

Joseph's too. Spare me this kind of joke; it distresses me, coming from you."

Bonaparte assured her, over and over again, that he was serious; that the age of the woman whom he should marry was indifferent to him, if, like herself, she did not appear to be past thirty; that he had maturely considered the proposal which he had just made to her; and he added these very remarkable words, "I am determined to marry. They want to give me a woman who is charming, good-tempered, agreeable, and who belongs to the Faubourg St. Germain. My Paris friends are in favour of this match. My old friends dissuade me from it. For my own part, I wish to marry, and what I propose to you suits me in many respects. Think about it." My mother broke off the conversation, telling him, laughingly, that for her own part she had no occasion to think any further; but, as to what concerned my brother, she would speak to him about it, and communicate his answer on the Tuesday following—it was then Saturday. She gave him her hand, and repeated, still laughing, that though she had some pretensions, they did not aspire so high as to conquer the heart of a man of twenty-six, and that she hoped their friendship would not be interrupted by this little affair. "At any rate, think of it," said Bonaparte. "Well, well, I will think of it," replied my mother, laughing as heartily as before.

I was too young to be made acquainted with this conversation at the time when it occurred. It was not till my marriage that my mother related to me the particulars here detailed. My brother made a note of this singular affair. Had Bonaparte's overtures been accepted, he would never have become what he afterwards was.

When Junot heard of it he told us that the thing appeared less extraordinary to him than to us. About the 4th of October Bonaparte had got himself appointed to some committee of war: I know not what the appointment was, but it was no great thing. His plans, his schemes, had all one object, one direction, which tended towards the east. The name of Comnene might have a

powerful interest for an imagination that was eminently creative; the name of Calomeros joined to that of Comnene might be of great service to him. "The great secret of all these matches lay in that idea," thought Junot; and I think so too.

A cousin of my mother, named Dimo Stephanopoli, had shortly before arrived from Corsica, and applied to her to assist him in obtaining employment and promotion. This carries me back to a period of which I cannot help having a disagreeable recollection, since it involuntarily reminds me of an unpleasant scene, which set Bonaparte at variance for ever with my mother—a circumstance which I cannot forbear deploring, whenever the consequences of this fact, so simple in itself, occur to my memory.

It was, as I have said, on a Saturday that Bonaparte had the conversation which I have just detailed with my mother. On the preceding Wednesday, when my mother had a party to dinner, she had spoken to General Bonaparte in behalf of her cousin Stephanopoli, begging that he would get him admitted into the Guard of the Convention. He was five feet nine inches high (French measure); his head was rather too small for that tall stature, but he had handsome features. In short, there was certainly not a regiment but would have been glad to make such an acquisition. This Bonaparte admitted when my mother remarked it, on introducing her cousin to him: he promised a speedy and above all a favourable answer.

On Friday my mother asked the general if he had thought of her recommendation. "You cannot doubt it," replied Bonaparte. "I have the promise of the minister of war: there is but one step more to take, which I purpose doing to-morrow, and then I will bring you the commission." The next day was the unlucky Saturday. My mother asked where was the commission; "for," said she, "I look upon it as *mine*." He answered under the influence of what had just passed between them, and though there was no asperity in his words, still he did not appear to be so well-disposed as on the preceding day.

"Napoleon," said my mother laughingly, "there are two persons in you at this moment. Continue, I entreat you, to be the man whom I love and esteem, and above all do not let the other get the better of you." Bonaparte was at the table at this moment by the side of my mother. He frowned and pushed his plate sharply from him. "Why be angry?" said my mother mildly. "You mistake the real cause of my anger," replied Bonaparte. "I am angry with myself. This is Quintidi, and nothing done. But rely upon me for to-morrow." Out of delicacy my mother did not insist upon that day, though she had a good mind to do so. The same evening she spoke to my brother on the subject of the morning's conversation. My brother answered *No.* Reasons foreign to these Memoirs prevented his accepting the proposal.

On Monday morning General Bonaparte called to see my mother: he was on horseback, and surrounded by a numerous staff. He appeared in high spirits, and said a number of amiable and even flattering things to my mother. That very morning Dimo Stephanopoli had written his cousin a long and ridiculous letter (I beg his pardon), in which he complained bitterly of the delay of his appointment, which he seemed to lay to the charge of my mother. At the moment when General Bonaparte was kissing her hand, and praising its whiteness, she snatched it from his with violence, and asked whether the commission was at last made out. The general replied that it was not, but that it was promised him for the *morrow.*

This was an unlucky expression; my mother would not have been so much vexed by it if he had not twice repeated it since the commencement of the affair. "What does this mean?" she asked, contracting her two little brows into a frown, and looking at Bonaparte with sparkling eyes and flushed cheeks. "What does this mean. Is it a wager, is it a hoax, or is it ill-will? In that case it would have been much more simple to refuse me at first. I dare say I should have found friends who would have served me."—"Nothing of the kind you have mentioned, Madame Permon," replied Bonaparte, "important business

has taken up every moment of my time." — "Every moment of your time! Don't tell me such absurdities. And what can be the important business which prevents you from keeping your word? Is this the custom which you have nowadays adopted in your new military code?" Bonaparte turned crimson, which he was not in the habit of doing. "You are rather too severe, Madame Permon." —"Not half severe enough. You want a good shake to waken you from the dream into which the grandeurs of your Republic have lulled you."

The conversation, which had at first been general, was suspended, and the most profound silence prevailed; both of them were ruffled. Chauvet, who, owing to his friendship for both, could do more than any other to restore peace, made an attempt and addressed two or three words to my mother; but she was in such a passion that she did not hear what was said. She declared that "she felt herself affronted." Twenty times had General Bonaparte given his word (this was quite true) that the commission had been granted, and that some trivial formality depending on himself was the sole cause of the delay. She had explained to him how important it was, for family reasons, that Dimo Stephanopoli should have his commission. General Bonaparte knew all this, and day after day, promise after promise, the time had run away and nothing was done. "Could an enemy have served me worse?" continued my mother, becoming more animated as she spoke. "In this manner he prevented the steps which I might otherwise have taken. I trusted to him, in short, and——" "You are too warm just now, not to be unjust, Madame Permon," said General Bonaparte, taking up his hat to go away; "to-morrow I hope to find you more calm, and consequently more reasonable." Bonaparte approached my mother, and took her hand to kiss it, but she was so irritated that she drew it from him with violence. In this movement she hit him upon the eye with such force as to give him pain. "You cannot make reparation for what is past," said she, haughtily. "What is done, is done; with me words are nothing, actions

everything. *Ma va bene. Ramentatevi che, se non sono Corsa, sono nata in Corsica.*"—"*Questa rimembranza sarà sempre per me cosa grandevole, Signora Panoria. Mai non temerò di lei. Dunque la mano e pace.*"[1] He advanced and whispered to my mother, at the same time stooping to take her hand, "Those young folks are laughing at us. We look like two children." My mother drew back her hand, and folded her arms with a disdainful smile. Bonaparte looked at her for a moment, as if to solicit a change which he evidently wished for. When he saw that she showed no disposition to relent he made a motion, which was rather an expression of impatience than a bow, and hastily withdrew.

"For God's sake," said Chauvet, "don't part thus! Let me call him back, Madame Permon, I entreat you. You have hurt his feelings. It was wrong to talk to him in that manner before his aides-de-camp. See how slowly he goes down stairs; he expects, I am certain, to be called back." My mother's disposition was excellent, and she had an advantage that is very rare in a woman; when she was in the wrong she would admit it. But whether, at this moment, her self-love was too deeply wounded, or whether she actually thought she was not in the wrong on this occasion, she would not allow Chauvet to call back Bonaparte. "See how obstinate he is on his side!" said my mother. "He is wrong, but nothing would induce him to recede a single step. Why, then, would you have me take that retrograde step?" A servant presently came to say that the general wished to speak with M. Chauvet. "Go, my dear Chauvet," said my mother, giving him her hand, "go; do not condemn me; I am not to blame."

My brother was absent during this unfortunate scene. Had he been there I am sure that it would not not have happened, or that he would have given a different turn

[1] "But fare you well: Recollect that if I be not a Corsican by family, I was born in Corsica."—"The remembrance of that will always be agreeable to me, Madame Panoria. But I shall have no apprehension on that account. Give me, therefore, your hand, and let us be reconciled."

to the affair. When I related the particulars to him in the evening, by desire of my mother (for she could not yet talk of it without being in a passion), he was exceedingly vexed. As for my mother, she was very sorry for the circumstance. She was fond of Bonaparte, as we are fond of a child that we have brought up. In the sequel, the malice of Bonaparte provoked in my mother a feeling of acrimony, which assumed a tint, not of hatred, for that she had for nobody, but of decided dislike, especially after the 4th of September, which struck a great number of her friends, and which the public voice attributed to Bonaparte. I know not whether it was the same day or the following that we saw Fesch. His disposition was kind, mild, and extremely conciliating; he was much grieved at this quarrel between my mother and his nephew, and endeavoured to reconcile them; but there were two obstructions, the more difficult to be removed inasmuch as one of them was known only to my mother and Bonaparte, and the other to himself alone. The latter was perhaps the more important of the two. It arose, as Chauvet had anticipated, from what he had suffered on finding himself treated like a schoolboy who had just left Brienne, in the presence of officers who as yet knew but little about him. Had there been none present but Junot, Chauvet, or some others, he would have been the first to laugh at a thing which now severely mortified him. The other point, which had also a very active part in the whole affair, was the state of ill-humour and hostility in which Bonaparte had been ever since the preceding Saturday. However, be this as it may, the rupture was complete. We were several days without seeing him: he then called one evening when he knew that we were at the theatre, and at last he stayed away altogether. We learned shortly afterwards from his uncle and Chauvet that he was going to marry Madame de Beauharnais, and that he was appointed commander-in-chief of the army in Italy. We saw him once more before his departure on a distressing occasion.

CHAPTER XX.

Recollections of Toulouse—M. de Regnier, commandant—Introduction of M. de Geouffre to my mother—Mutual passion—Marriage of M. de Geouffre and my sister Cecile—Melancholy presentiments of my sister—Her death—Destruction of our fortune—Count de Perigord, uncle of M. de Talleyrand—Admirable conduct of a valet-de-chambre during the reign of terror—Decline of my mother's health—Visit of condolence paid by Bonaparte to my mother—Death of Count de Perigord—My brother joins the army of Italy—Journey to the waters of Cauterets—The Pyrenees.

I HAVE mentioned the reasons which induced my mother to receive company during our residence at Toulouse. One day when she had invited several persons, among whom was M. de Regnier, commandant of the place, one of the most assiduous of our friends, he sent, about half an hour before dinner-time, to excuse himself. He wrote to my mother that "one of his friends, charged with a mission to him, had just arrived; that he was obliged to do the honours of the staff of the place, and could not leave him." My mother's answer will easily be guessed; she begged him to come and to bring his friend along with him.

"An adjutant-general, a friend of Regnier," said my mother, "that must be some old codger like himself, who will be very dull. Farewell to our plan of music, my young friends" (my brother had just then leave of absence to come to pay us a short visit); "but we have one resource, and that is, to make him play at *reversi*. An old officer of infantry is sure to know how to play at cards,—ay, and how to cheat too."

My mother was the more surprised when she saw M.

de Regnier followed by a young man of genteel appearance, having a handsome face, and the manners of very good company, which at the period in question was a very uncommon thing. After dinner the plan of music, so far from being abandoned, was, on the contrary, carried into execution at the request of M. de Geouffre, who was already persuaded that none but celestial sounds could issue from the mouth of my sister.

Since leaving the convent of the Dames de la Croix my sister had become a charming creature. Her features were not regular when examined separately; indeed, there was nothing pleasing in them; but they formed altogether a whole so sweet, so graceful, so much in harmony with the rest of her person, that on seeing her it was impossible to help exclaiming, "What a delightful girl!" Large dark blue eyes, with long thick eyelashes, rosy cheeks, teeth perfectly white, the finest auburn hair I ever saw, a slender elegant figure—these advantages, which are by no means exaggerated, greatly outweighed Cecile's external defects, and caused you to overlook too wide a mouth, too long a nose, and hands and arms too large for her height.

But my sister had, moreover, what is invaluable in a woman, namely, a charm diffused over her whole person by an air of mild melancholy which rendered her adorable. She possessed an excellent temper and good understanding. All these things combined to form a halo, which enveloped that bright sweet face of sixteen, on which you were quite surprised never to catch more than a transient smile. Cecile was a female who would have been distinguished in the world had it been fortunate enough to retain her.

The day on which M. de Geouffre was introduced was one of her *smiling* days as we called them. I see her still, notwithstanding the many years that have since fled, dressed as she was on that day. She wore a frock of rose-coloured crape, laced behind, showing to perfection her slender waist, and floating around her like a roseate cloud. The sleeves were tight, and trimmed at the bottom with white blonde, forming ruffles. Her shoulders

and bosom, which were delicately fair, were seen through a *fichu* of Chambery gauze, likewise trimmed with white blonde. A pink ribbon passing through her hair formed a bow on one side. On seeing her thus attired it was impossible to avoid being struck by the graceful harmony between her bright youthful face and this costume, equally bright and youthful. It made a deep impression upon M. de Geouffre. In the evening we had music. My sister, a pupil of Herrmann, was an excellent performer on the piano; she played two duets with my brother: she sang, and the evening passed away as by enchantment. M. de Geouffre was not proof against her charms. He became so enamoured of my sister that before he left our house he felt that his future happiness depended on one of its inmates. M. de Geouffre remained at Toulouse, and forwarded his despatches by an officer to the headquarters of General Dugommier, by whom he was sent. He called upon us next day, and again the day afterwards: my mother, who immediately perceived the drift of his visits, durst not say anything, but she was uneasy. At length M. de Geouffre prevailed upon M. de Regnier to speak for him, though the latter felt extreme repugnance to do so, for he was acquainted with my father's sentiments, and though my mother was infinitely more moderate, yet M. de Regnier did not conceal from his friend the certainty that there would be a tacit agreement between them not to give their daughter to an officer of the Republican army. As he had foreseen, my father's first word was a refusal, as well as my mother's.

"And what have you to object against him?" said Regnier; "he is of a good family. I have proved to you that he belongs to the Geouffres of the Limousin; several of that family served in Champagne and Burgundy, and have emigrated. He possesses a good fortune and a fine estate near Brives-la-Gaillarde; he holds a remarkable rank for his age; he is highly respected in the army, and Dugommier promises to do great things for him. He is, besides, a handsome man, which is no drawback in an affair of marriage. Lastly, he is a man of sound under-

standing. Come, Madame Permon, be persuaded." My mother admitted the truth of all this, but still said *No;* nor did she change her mind. Soon after M. de Geouffre arrived at Toulouse to take the command of the military division. It was General Dugommier who, out of friendship for him, and wishing to facilitate his marriage, thus placed him in a situation to follow up his suit more effectually. Accordingly, when he was at Toulouse, his personal solicitations were joined to those of M. de Regnier. He also interested in his behalf a family with whom we were very intimate, that of Peytes de Moncabrié. Madame de Moncabrié was the first to project a plan which nobody had thought of, how strange soever it may appear, excepting perhaps M. de Geouffre—still it was nothing more than conjecture. This excellent woman wrote immediately to Madame de St. Ange, who came without delay. She said nothing to my mother, but watched Cecile. She soon perceived that my sister was attacked by a nervous disease which might prove fatal.

"Panoria," said she one morning to my mother, "when do you marry Cecile?"—"What a question!" replied my mother. "You know perfectly well that I have refused."—"Have you noticed the girl? have you seen how she is altered? do you know that you are accountable for what she suffers?"—"Kalli," said my mother, who was strongly excited, "I leave you to manage your family as you please; let me beg you not to interfere with mine."—"Is that the tone you assume? well then, I will tell you, with my habitual bluntness, that you are not a good mother."—"Kalli!"—"Yes, you are not a good mother. Send for your daughter; ask Loulou how her sister passes the night, and you will lower your tone a little."

I was questioned. I was obliged to confess that my sister wept a great deal; but she had so strictly forbidden me to mention it that I had been forced to be silent. My mother burst into tears in her turn: my sister was called. The fact is, that the poor girl loved as well as she was loved, but she durst not say a word about it before my

mother, of whom she was exceedingly afraid, because, though a good mother, she was to her a very severe one. My father was too ill to be talked to on the subject; my brother was far from us; I was too young for such a topic of conversation. Madame de Moncabrié was, in her virtuous kindness, the angel who guessed the secret that would ultimately have killed the poor girl.—"You wish for this marriage?" said my mother: "well then, it shall take place."—Accordingly, in a month, my sister, having become Madame de Geouffre, was settled at the Hotel Spinola, the headquarters of the military division which her husband commanded.

It is difficult to conceive a happiness more profound, more complete, than that of my sister during the first months of her marriage. She was formed to feel it, and accordingly she fully enjoyed it. It was disturbed by one thing only, and that was the idea that her husband might be called from her into the field. It was to no purpose to tell her that the elevated rank which he held he owed solely to his presence in the field of battle, and to several wounds which he had got the better of; she replied to it all by tears only, and begged in a timid voice that her husband would send in his resignation. He demonstrated to her with a smile that the thing was impossible; that his army was engaged in active warfare, and that it would be compromising his honour. At length, peace between France and Spain was signed, and my sister, who was in the way to become a mother, made a fresh attempt, which was more successful. Her husband, who was passionately fond of her, solicited his dismissal with as much ardour as at that time others solicited appointments. All his friends dissuaded him from this step, which in fact blasted his future prospects. It was from this same army of the Eastern Pyrenees that, a few months afterwards, Bonaparte selected the multitude of superior officers who formed the nucleus of the army of Italy, and all of whom were comrades of my brother-in-law. Such were Augereau, Lanusse, Lannes, Marbot, Bessières, Duphot, Clausel, etc. etc. His destiny would not have been different from

theirs; but he yielded to the entreaties of his wife, and they retired to their estate at Objat, near Brives-la-Gaillarde. Thus, at the age of only twenty-four, he returned to civil life, and shut himself out for ever from a career which he had so brilliantly begun.

When my sister left Toulouse she was five months advanced in pregnancy. At her departure she asked my mother's blessing in the most affecting manner. She felt convinced, she said, that she should not survive her accouchement. Her presentiment was, alas! but too well founded. My sister was brought to bed towards the end of January 1795, soon after the death of my father. My brother-in-law had communicated to us this event, which is always attended with apprehensions for a young female who is confined for the first time, with a joy proportionate to his happiness. Cecile had given him a fine boy, and intended to suckle him herself. "My wife is so well," wrote M. de Geouffre, "that she is already talking about carrying her Adolphe to her mother to receive her blessing. She is more charming than ever, with a colour like that of a rose. You may conceive, my dear mamma, the intense joy of all around her, so dearly is she loved." The rest of the letter contained the particulars of the event, which had been fortunate in every respect. It took place on the 23d, and the letter reached us on the 27th of January.

On the 1st of February my mother and I were with my brother, who had the second floor to himself. He had caught a violent cold, and we had dined in his room, that he might not expose himself to the cold air. My mother was seated on his sofa: she had placed my brother in a large easy-chair, and was laughing like a child at the thought that, if my brother was married, as she wished him to be within six months (she had a very good match in view for him), I might also be some time afterwards. "Now the game is begun," said she, "I see no reason why I may not be grandmother to twenty or thirty children." At length she ceased laughing. "Cecile must be a charming young mother," said

she with emotion; "I should like to see her in her new functions."

My mother was very changeable in her impressions. When talking of herself as a grandmother, the idea had tickled her so much that she had laughed till she cried. But the moment her imagination presented to her affectionate soul the picture of the infant who had made her a grandmother, pressed to the bosom of her daughter, and imbibing life at that source, her eyes ran over, and she fell into a kind of reverie, which my brother and I took good care not to interrupt. It was nine o'clock: all was quiet, for at that period equipages were rare in Paris, and our quarter, independently of that, was then very lonely. We all three kept silence, which was broken only by a soft and monotonous tune, which my mother hummed in a low tone: you would have supposed that she was lulling an infant to sleep. She was thinking of Cecile and her little Adolphe. All at once there was a knock at the gate, given with such force as to make us start. My brother and I burst out into a laugh. "That knock makes me ill," said my mother, clapping her hand to her forehead. "What unmannerly person can it be knocking in that way at this time of night?" We heard the gate shut, and presently heavy steps on the pavement. My brother rang the bell, and a letter which the postman had just brought was put into his hand. "Ah!" said Albert, "News from Cecile! It is from Brives, and Geouffre's handwriting."—"Whom can he have lost?" I exclaimed, the black seal of the letter having caught my eye. In asking this question, to which I attached no importance, I raised my eyes to my brother: he was pale and excessively agitated. "What says Geouffre in that letter?" said my mother, rising, and going up to my brother, whose sudden emotion revealed to her a disaster. "My sister has been ill, but she is better now," replied Albert, in a tremulous tone. My mother snatched the letter, cast her eyes on it, gave a frightful shriek, and sank upon her knees. My poor sister was dead!

None can form any conception of our anguish but those

who have lost objects whom they dearly loved in a manner equally unexpected: neither can language describe or express it. My mother was very ill for several days. The death of my sister would at any time have deeply afflicted her; but at the moment when she had become a mother, at the moment when the tomb had scarcely closed over our father! And then that mirth, those songs, amidst which this death had been announced! Poor mother! she was unhappy, very unhappy; for to all these causes of grief was superadded another, which my brother and I had alone been acquainted with, and which wrung her heart when it came to her knowledge.

Cecile was regretted by all who knew her. The family into which she had been adopted, her mother-in-law, her father-in-law, mourned her like ourselves. She was gentle and pious as an angel; endued with talents, virtues, graces —those attractive charms which are not to be imitated, and which win every one's love. Bonaparte sent the very next day after we heard of this new calamity which had befallen my mother, and called himself to see her. He talked to her in a tone of the sincerest friendship. My mother was so overwhelmed that she could scarcely prevail upon herself to admit him. He set out immediately afterwards for Italy. He was already married to Madame de Beauharnais.

My brother-in-law came almost immediately to Paris. His interview with us was agonising. My mother felt her misfortune still more keenly when she saw M. de Geouffre. She said to me, when going to bed at night, that perhaps she might not be able to see him again the next day. His presence reminded her of the time when she had withstood all solicitations to unite him to my sister. Cecile loved him, and my mother exclaimed, with tears, "Poor Cecile! thy life was so short, and I have abridged it of six months' happiness!"

M. de Geouffre did not remain long with us. He returned to the Limousin, whither he was recalled by the only interest that was left him. He was impatient to be again with his child, whom he had consigned to the

care of his mother. On taking leave of him we made him promise to bring Adolphe to us very soon.

We had been obliged to apprise my mother that our situation was no longer such as she might suppose it to be. The blow was less painful than I had apprehended. There were in her heart so many bleeding wounds that it was scarcely affected by matters of that kind. She was perfectly sensible of the necessity of making retrenchments in our household, which had been kept up on too expensive a scale for our almost ruined fortune. My brother, who thought only of our welfare, without caring about himself, resolved to turn his attention to commerce, and had the good luck to succeed in his first speculations. He was about to devote himself entirely to this career, but was afraid to enter into an engagement which would have bound him for fifteen years. He would have been obliged to go to India, to expatriate himself, and leave us without protection. All this deterred him. He thanked our friend Magan, who had procured him this chance of making his fortune, and confined himself to what he was then doing.

My mother had again met with some old friends. The prisons were open ever since the downfall of the directorial *régime*, and people began to breathe with more freedom. We had again fallen in with persons to whom we had bidden a painful adieu. This produced a singular impression, a mixture of delight and uneasiness; and it was a long time before we could relish the satisfaction of seeing them again at liberty. But how was this satisfaction embittered in regard to many of them! Among these was the dearest of my mother's friends, he whom I loved in my childhood as one loves a grandfather, I mean the Count de Perigord. Having escaped the sanguinary proscriptions he returned to society without happiness, without joy. He was already far advanced in years, ailing, afflicted with gout, wholly destitute of fortune, and absolutely isolated. His two sons had emigrated. His daughter, the Duchess de Mailly, was dead: there were left behind only a few friends as unfortunate as himself,

and whose deplorable situation prevented them from rendering him any assistance.[1]

When we first saw him again my mother could not help starting with sad surprise. So great was the change that the eye of friendship could scarcely recognise him. There was the same kindness in his tone, but he was no longer the same: his eye was dim, and it was evident that the springs of life were worn out.

How could I say that he was alone! how could I have forgotten a man as noble as any titled hero, devoting himself to his master's service, and saving his life by his admirable management! The Count de Perigord had in his household a valet named Beaulieu. This man had always been an excellent servant; he proved that interest had not been his stimulus. From the moment that his master was apprehended all his attention was directed to him. He carried to him whatever he thought would be good for or agreeable to him. In short, his devotedness was entire and exclusive.

The Count de Perigord, like all the innocent persons who were then thrown into prison, was persuaded that by wearying the Committee of Public Safety by petitions he should obtain prompt and complete justice. Nothing could be more false than this reasoning, as Beaulieu learned from one of the relatives of the man in whose house Robespierre lodged. Repeated petitions occasioned the death of most of the prisoners. In many instances, the writer had never been thought of. The first petition produced ill-humour; the second aggravated it; and very frequently the wretches brought the poor victims to trial to avoid the annoyance of a third petition.

Beaulieu, on hearing of this mode of rendering justice, determined that his master should not obtain it in that manner. Now, poor Count Perigord was one of the very persons who cherished the conviction that they could get out of prison only by dint of importunity. In conse-

[1] From this number must be excepted the Count de Monchenu, who, having preserved his fortune, did for Count Perigord all that devoted attachment can do for a needy friend.

quence, a petition was daily addressed either to *ce bon Monsieur de Robespierre*, or to *cet excellent Monsieur de Collot-d'Herbois*, or again to *Monsieur Fouquier-Tinville.* "How very odd it is!" at length exclaimed Count de Perigord, "nobody answers me. I cannot understand it."

There was a very good reason why his petitions remained unanswered. Beaulieu threw them all into the fire. In this manner he caused his master to be forgotten. He bribed the turnkeys handsomely; and then, as soon as the Count de Perigord began to be known in one prison he obtained his removal to another. In short, a son could not have shown a more affectionate, and, above all, a more active solicitude for his father. When he had the good fortune to recover his liberty, M. de Perigord went to lodge at the house of a friend, M. de Monchenu. Beaulieu was still about him, bestowing on him the most delicate attentions and sacrificing for this purpose all that he had. As a proof of the kind disposition of M. de Perigord, one of his servants in livery, a class of domestics whose sentiments are in general less honourable and less elevated, on hearing that his master was again out of prison, went and offered him his services. This man's name was Boisvert. I know not what became of him or Beaulieu at the death of M. de Perigord, which happened shortly after his liberation; but I hope that the Prince de Chalais has duly provided for them; merit so extraordinary has a right to be rewarded.

The Count de Perigord had a club foot; I do not recollect whether it was so from his birth, or the consequence of a hurt; but there are reasons to believe it was a family defect. He came every Thursday to spend nearly the whole of the day with us, and this was sure to give rise to a smart altercation between him and Beaulieu. He insisted upon coming on foot; Beaulieu would not let him, and told him with truth that he could not. His infirmity, in fact, prevented him from walking. He suffered very great pain.

One day he received a letter from M. de Chalais, who

was then in England. He told his father that he was starving, that the emigrants in England were reduced to the extremity of want, and that he was completely wretched. M. de Perigord happened to dine at my mother's on the very day when this letter arrived. The change which it had wrought in him was striking; he had persuaded himself that the account of his son's misery was literally true. During the whole dinner he could not help repeating, "Good God! they are perishing with hunger!" and the viands remained untouched upon his plate. At length several persons urged that this could not be possible, since he knew himself that M. de Chalais had carried resources away with him. "He may have lost them," said the poor father. The very next day he learned to a certainty, from a person who had returned to France (for there were some who had returned so early), that his son was still rich; at any rate that he possessed property which placed him beyond the reach of want. "The emigrants are not all so well off as he is," said M. de N.

The Count de Perigord was more easy, but a blow had been given to a constitution worn out by the four years of revolution which had elapsed. The death of the King and Queen, the captivity of the young King and the Princess, the misfortunes of the monarchy, which had affected him as family calamities, all this work of destruction had inflicted a mortal stroke; the least shock, therefore, was sufficient to put an end to him. Eight days afterwards the place which he occupied at our table was vacant, and two days later he was no more. His death was a new calamity for my mother; she fell ill. Her lungs were affected. Sleeplessness, an obstinate cough, slight fever, and other alarming symptoms, induced her to consult a physician; she was ordered to the waters of Cauterets.

Meanwhile my brother received a letter which was destined to produce a great change in our situation. He was summoned to Italy, to take upon him administrative functions. I am sure that Bonaparte was no stranger to

this appointment, though he appeared to have nothing to do with it.

The parting was painful. So many misfortunes had burst upon us, so many wounds had been inflicted on the heart of my poor mother, that she dreaded everything. The simplest step made her apprehend a fatal result. She was on the point of begging my brother not to leave her. Had she been alone he would, no doubt, not have done so. But no sooner did her eyes rest upon me than she felt that it was my brother's duty to perform the promise which he had made to my father on his death-bed. My mother therefore consented to his departure. I was left alone to attend her; and, notwithstanding my youth, I was also charged with the management of all her concerns. "God will give you the strength and judgment necessary to enable you to perform your noble task, my dear girl," said my brother to me, clasping me in his arms, at the moment of his departure. "Have confidence in God, confidence in yourself, and all will go on well. I will often write to you; and you must inform me of everything. Whenever my mother shall express a wish which the means I leave you are inadequate to gratify, write to me immediately, and that God in whom I put great faith will not forsake two children whose sole aim is the happiness of their mother."

My brother proceeded to his destination, and we, on our part, set out for the Pyrenees. At a later period I revisited those beautiful mountains. I skirted and crossed their long chain; but it was not till my third journey to Cauterets that I could indulge my ardent wish to explore the mountains which I saw before me. Those noble pine-forests which encircle, as it were, the Vignemale, the loftiest of the French Pyrenees, beheld me pursuing alone the tracks trodden by the caprice of pedestrians.[1] La Cerisay, Maourat, le Pont d'Espagne, the lake of Gaube, and even

[1] Queen Hortense made the same tour the year before; her journey has no resemblance to mine. My guides lost their way; but though her tour was not attended with perilous risks like mine, she presented her guides with a gold medal, inscribed *Voyage au Vignemale.*

Esplemousse, were the favourite points of the excursion which I took with my mother, not on foot (for she was unable to walk), but in the odd vehicle of the country. It is a kind of sedan, formed by a small straw stool, to which are attached two strong poles, and which is covered with white cloth, supported by three very slight hoops; and a small piece of wood, two inches broad, for the feet to rest upon, is attached by two bits of packthread. When you are seated in this species of cage, two sturdy mountaineers, hawk-eyed and chamois-footed, carry you off with an agility that is at first alarming. There is something romantic in the velocity with which you are hurried along the brink of a dark precipice, the depth of which the eye cannot measure, or in an ascent not less rapid through an ocean of clouds to which the sun communicates every shade of crimson and purple.

This impression is indeed very strange. The first moment has something so unusual, so different from our ordinary sensations, that the eyes close, and the hand by a nervous contraction grasps one of the slight arms of the seat. Presently you wish to see where you are; you eye with avidity the very peril of which you felt such dread; and soon the rapidity of your course, whether descending or ascending, those vivid lights, that moving rainbow which surrounds you, those perfumes which rise at every step of the robust mountaineer on the carpet strewed with thyme and wild pinks over which you are flying, that succession of enchantments, which are natural, and in which you roll, as it were; all this intoxicates and imparts to you an activity of life, a double respiration, which add to existence and augment its happiness.

CHAPTER XXI.

Our return to Paris—The Emigrants—Sketches of Parisian society—Public balls and well-known characters—Ball at the Thelusson Hotel—Madame de D——s—M. d'Hautefort—Madame Tallien—Madame Bonaparte—Madame Hamelin.

My mother's health was nearly re-established when we returned from the waters. Her grief, too, was much softened by change of scene, and still more by the hope of again meeting at Paris a great number of intimate acquaintance, commonly called *friends*, and who, though not real friends, gave a peculiar charm to the commerce of life. This charm is unknown to the society of the present day, which is become harsh and sour; none will admit that in the daily intercourse of life each ought to furnish his contingent of complaisance and affability. Accordingly, we now see none of those assemblages of forty or fifty persons meeting daily at the houses of five or six of their number. Independently of the pleasures which this way of living afforded, more important advantages resulted from it. A person who possessed no influence always found a support in the company to which he belonged. If you were not swayed by a feeling of good-nature, you were afraid of meeting every day a person whom you had refused to oblige; you would have seen a discontented face. It was therefore obligatory on him who had it in his power to oblige those about him. I admit that then, as still, there existed abuses, and that many of them originated in favour; but I will ask if, under a form more rude, more speculative for the parties concerned, less agreeable in its results, there are not at

this day, as there were at the time of which I am speaking, immense abuses of power and children of favouritism. If I had time to throw away I could make out a fine list of obscure names which the country knows only from their being inserted in patents and grants of pensions.

Be this as it may, when my mother heard of the return of the greater part of her acquaintance her joy was extreme. France then wore the appearance of tranquillity, and the emigrants returned in crowds with a confidence which proved very fatal to them a few months later (in Fructidor), but which seemed at that time to be perfectly well founded. The women, in particular, were in a truly communicative enchantment. At length they again beheld that dear native country, beautiful France, the remembrance of which imparts double bitterness to every land of exile, how hospitable soever it may be. I recollect that at the first meeting between my mother and Madame Martois,[1] with whom she had been intimately acquainted, that lady who had been but two days in Paris, and was still quite overcome with joy at the mere sight of the barriers, threw herself into my mother's arms, burst into tears, and was more than a quarter of an hour before she could conquer her emotion. Her daughter told us that the same thing occurred with all the friends whom she again met; in this there was on her part neither affectation nor acting; it proceeded from an ardent soul, which enjoyed in its plenitude all the happiness attached to the word *native country*. But how many disappointments awaited the unhappy exiles on their return to their native land! Poverty, isolation, death, were the lot of most of them.

One of the most painful situations, and to which I was frequently witness, arose from the difference, or rather the diversity, of the shades of opinion. These shades produced discord in the most united families. The

[1] She was either a Neapolitan or Roman, I know not which; but having been brought to France when a year old, and married there, she was as much or more attached to it than to her native country. She was a most lovely woman. Still young at the period of her return, she was preparing to enjoy all the happiness which it caused her, but three months after her arrival she died of smallpox, at the age of thirty-four.

destruction of principles had led, as a natural consequence, to one of a similar nature in the most ordinary habits of life. Thus all those delightful reunions which formerly constituted the charm of intimate acquaintance no longer existed, or were poisoned by odious politics, which engendered sharp contradiction, anger, quarrels, frequently terminating in ruptures between husband and wife, brother and sister, and sometimes between father and son.

Such was the picture presented by society in Paris at the period of which I am now treating, that is, 1796 and 1797. The word *society* was vulgarly used to designate assemblages of persons; but in point of fact there were no social meetings. Private individuals were afraid of appearing wealthy by receiving company habitually, and they contented themselves with frequenting those public assemblages where, at that time, the best society was to be found. Such was the system adopted, not only in regard to concerts, but also to balls. It would scarcely be believed at the present day that the most elegant women went to dance at the Thelusson[1] and the Richelieu[2] balls; but the most curious thing is, that persons of all opinions, of all castes, were there intermingled, and laughed and danced together in the utmost harmony.

One day at the Thelusson ball, a droll adventure befell Madame de D., who sometimes took her daughter with her. Such places necessarily brought into contact persons who not only differed in sentiments but were mutually hurt at finding themselves together; thus, in spite of the apparently good understanding between them, there frequently occurred scenes, unperceived by the multitude, but extremely interesting to those who were lucky enough to witness and able to comprehend them.

Madame de D. had arrived very late. The great circular room was quite full, and it was impossible to find two places. Nevertheless, by dint of elbowing and en-

[1] At the Thelusson Hotel, at the extremity of the Rue Cerutti, facing the Boulevard, there was at that time an immense arcade. Murat purchased it during the Consulate.

[2] Held in like manner at the Richelieu Hotel.

treaties, these ladies penetrated to the centre of the room. Madame de D., who was not of an absolutely timid character, looked about on all sides to see if she could at least discover one seat, when her eyes encountered a young and charming face, surrounded by a profusion of light hair, with a pair of large dark-blue eyes, and exhibiting altogether the image of the most graceful of sylphs. This young female was conducted back to her seat by M. de Trénis, which proved that she danced well; for M. de Trénis invited none to the honour of being his partners but such as deserved the character of *good dancers.* The graceful creature, after courtesying with a blush to the Vestris of the ballroom, sat down by the side of a female who appeared to be her elder sister, and whose elegant dress excited the notice and envy of all the women at the ball. "Who are those persons?" said Madame de D., to the old Marquis d'Hautefort, who escorted her.—"What! is it possible that you do not know the Viscountess Beauharnais? It is she and her daughter. She is now Madame Bonaparte.[1] But stay, there is a vacant place by her; come and sit down; you may renew your acquaintance with her."

Madame de D., without making any reply, took the arm of M. d'Hautefort, and drew him, whether he would or not, into one of the little saloons which preceded the great rotunda. "Are you mad?" said she to him, when they had reached the room. "A pretty place, truly, by the side of Madame Bonaparte! Ernestine would of course have been obliged to make acquaintance with her daughter. Why, Marquis, you must have lost your wits."—"No, 'faith! What harm can there be in Ernestine's making acquaintance, or even forming a close friendship with Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais? She is a charming girl, sweet-tempered, amiable."—"What is all that to me! I will never connect myself with such persons. I do not like people who disgrace their misfor-

[1] At this period Madame Bonaparte was not much known in the world, nor had she been presented at the court of Marie Antoinette. The real fact is, that Madame de D. did not know her.

tunes."[1] M. d'Hautefort shrugged his shoulders and held his tongue. "*Eh! mon Dieu!* who is that beautiful woman?" inquired Madame de D., pointing to a female who entered the ballroom, and on whom all eyes were instantly fixed. This lady was above the middle height, but a perfect harmony in her whole person took away all appearance of the awkwardness of too lofty a stature. It was the Venus of the capitol, but still more beautiful than the work of Phidias; for you perceived in her the same perfection of features, the same symmetry in arms, hands, and feet, and the whole animated by a benevolent expression, a reflection of the magic mirror of the soul, which indicated all that there was in that soul, and this was kindness. Her dress did not contribute to heighten her beauty, for it consisted of a plain robe of India muslin, with folds in the antique style, and fastened at the shoulders by two cameos; a gold belt encircled her waist, and was likewise fastened by a cameo; a broad gold bracelet confined her sleeve considerably above the elbow; her hair, of a glossy black, was short, and curled all round her head, in the fashion then called *à la Titus;* over her fair and finely-turned shoulders was thrown a superb red cashmere shawl, an article at that time very rare and in great request. She disposed it around her in a manner at once graceful and picturesque, and formed altogether a most enchanting figure.

"That is Madame Tallien,"[2] said M. d'Hautefort to Madame de D. "Madame Tallien!" exclaimed she; "Good God! how could you bring me to such a place, my dear friend?"—"I defy you to find in all Paris a place where better company is brought together." He then muttered some of the civil things which he had at the service of those who displeased him.

[1] The expression was used, that is certain. The whole of the particulars of this ball were given to us by one of the relatives of M. d'Hautefort, who lent his arm to Madame de D., and never quitted the ladies the whole evening.

[2] I have lived at Bordeaux; I have had friends who owed their lives to Madame Tallien. I have been told all the good she has done, and I cannot say too much on that subject. Having never had reason to complain of her, it is therefore but natural that I should praise her.

At this moment a very strong scent of attar of roses suddenly pervaded the apartment. A crowd of young men, of the class then called *incroyables*, rushed towards the door to meet a young lady who had but just arrived, though it was exceedingly late. This female, though she could not but be pronounced plain, nevertheless possessed inconceivable attractions. Her figure was not good, but her little feet danced to admiration. She was dark, but her black eyes sparkled with such expression! Her face beamed with intelligence, and expressed at the same time all the kindness of the simplest person. She was altogether a good friend, and the most amusing of women. Finally, she pleased; she was a toast of the day. All the remarkable men at the ball surrounded her as soon as she appeared. M. Charles Dupaty, M. de Trénis, and M. Lafitte, immediately asked her to dance with them; she answered each with an expression of good-humour and intelligence, smiling in such a manner as to exhibit her ivory teeth; she continued to advance, shedding fragrance throughout the whole room.

Madame de D., who was annoyed by this scent, and who, like all busybodies, found fault with what others liked, began to shuffle about on the bench upon which she had found a seat, and at length said aloud, "Upon my word, I think that must be either Fargeon's wife, or his daughter.[1] 'Tis enough to make the strongest man faint." —"It is Madame Hamelin," said M. d'Hautefort. Next day he told us that nothing had amused him more that evening than being first gentleman to Madame de D., and thus having to name the persons who were real bugbears to her. "Madame Hamelin!" she exclaimed—"Madame Hamelin! Come, Ernestine," added she, in a voice tremulous with anger, "put on your *palatine*, and let us go." All that could be said served only to hasten her departure. "And that Marquis," repeated she in a tone of indignation, "to assure me that I should here meet

[1] Fargeon was a celebrated perfumer, before the Revolution. His son, who succeeded him, and who lives in the Rue de Roule, is also eminent in the same line of business.

with my former society! Yes, indeed; for this hour past I have been falling out of the frying-pan into the fire. Come, my dear, let us go."

This scene passed a few paces from the bench on which my mother and I were sitting. We were well acquainted with the Marquis d'Hautefort, who was very satirical, and who frequently made us laugh by the account of his adventures at this ball.

CHAPTER XXII.

The army of Italy—Triumphs of Bonaparte—My brother at Massa-Carrara—Lucien Bonaparte and Christine Boyer—Lucien-Brutus and St. Maximin-Marathon—Excursion to Versailles—Adventures of my brother—Elopement of Madame Felice—General Lannes and M. Felice—Rivalship of Lannes and my brother—Leoben and Campo-Formio—Bonaparte at Paris and general enthusiasm—Hatred of the Directory for Bonaparte—Ball at M. de Talleyrand's.

THE army of Italy surprised us every day by the prodigies communicated in its bulletins. The Directory, which disliked General Bonaparte, would fain have thrown a veil over the glory of the young hero; but the country, which he had saved from Austrian invasion, the soldiers whom he led to victory, had thousands of voices to proclaim it, and the only resource left to the ridiculous government which we had been silly enough to give ourselves, was to injure him whom it would gladly have thrown down after it had exalted him.

My brother was then in Italy; he had repaired to headquarters, and Bonaparte had been most kind to him; my brother had carried with him a letter of recommendation from Joseph Bonaparte. "What occasion is there for this letter?" said the general. "Whence arises so great a distrust of yourself?" continued he, looking more seriously at Albert. My brother replied that the slight altercation which had occurred between him and my mother had caused him to fear that the general would bear it in mind. "You are mistaken," said Bonaparte; "that scène was immediately effaced from my memory. I apprehend, indeed, that Madame Permon bears a much

stronger grudge on account of it than I do; and that is but natural," added he, laughing; "those who are in the wrong are sure to be most angry."

The very reverse was the case on this occasion, for it was Bonaparte who never forgot that unfortunate altercation. More than ten years afterwards he spoke to me on the subject with asperity. Be this as it may, he was very kind to my brother, received him in the most flattering manner, gave him all the support he could expect, and procured for him a very good appointment.

While General Bonaparte hurried on through Italy from victory to victory, his family was collecting at Paris, and forming a colony there. Joseph Bonaparte, after having been ambassador of the French Republic at Rome, had returned to Paris, bringing with him his wife's sister, Mademoiselle Désirée Clery, who was then in the deepest mourning for the tragical death of the brave but unfortunate Duphot, who had been murdered at Rome almost before her face, at the moment when he was going to marry her. Her first grief had abated somewhat of its violence; but there was still enough left to excite much pity. Luckily, she was yet young, and very agreeable.

Lucien announced his arrival. He had just obtained a post, I know not where, in Germany, and he was passing through Paris to see his family, nearly the whole of which was at that moment collected there. At this period Lucien had just been playing a silly trick, at which the general-in-chief, who now considered himself as the head of the family, was excessively mortified. Lucien Bonaparte is a man who, no doubt, has been known to many persons; but few have had the opportunity of appreciating him. I have known him long and intimately, and am capable of drawing his character without flattery or deceit. He was endowed by nature with rare talents; his mind was comprehensive; his imagination brilliant, and capable of estimating fully the characteristics of grandeur. It has been said that he was a man whom reason did not always influence in important affairs; this, however, is not true. His heart was kind, and although

sometimes hurried away by his passions, he can hardly be reproached with any serious charge; and as to his conduct towards his brother the Emperor, it was always honourable.

In 1794 or 1795 Lucien obtained the appointment of store-keeper at St. Maximin, a small village in Provence. At that time folly was somewhat the order of the day, even with the wisest. It was therefore necessary to sacrifice to this mania of the moment; not that I mean to excuse Lucien's folly by asserting that he was forced into it; on the contrary, I am of opinion that what he did he did voluntarily; and I am convinced that he acted not only with his own free will, but even from inclination, when he assumed the name of Brutus, and also changed, while he was about it, the name of St. Maximin into Marathon. Brutus at Marathon did not agree over and above well together: but the names were high-sounding, and that was sufficient.

The village of St. Maximin-Marathon is not a magnificent residence. Lucien-Brutus soon found this out, and ennui would have overpowered him had not love come to his aid. Lucien-Brutus became enamoured, desperately enamoured, of Mlle. Christine Boyer, whose father was at the head of the little public-house of St. Marathon. Lucien was then young, about twenty-three; he was in love for the first time, and he loved an angel of gentleness, virtue, and candour. Christine saw herself adored by an ardent, hot-headed young man, employing against her rustic simplicity all the stratagems, all the resources, with which his short experience of the world had made him acquainted, and which his love taught him to employ skilfully; and Christine was not proof against such an attack. She loved as she was loved, but she forgot not her duty, and Lucien was obliged to marry her in order to be happy; but he loved her too fondly to be aware of all the unpleasant feelings which this alliance was likely to excite in his own family. In fact, no sooner was General Bonaparte apprised of this marriage than he declared that he would never see the wife, and never meet

his brother again. A place was then given to Lucien in Germany, and the young couple came to Paris.

It was at this period that I saw Lucien Bonaparte for the first time, and that I became acquainted with Christine. There are women whose portraits it is easy to sketch. We say that they have large eyes, beautiful hair, a complexion blending the lily and the rose, and that is all. But is it only on account of her person that a woman is to be valued? Has she not within her divine charms to be described? a profusion of kindness, affection, and love? Such were the qualities that were to be found in the heart of the excellent Christine. I knew her, and no sooner knew than loved her. Subsequently, when I have seen her surrounded by the touching halo of maternal love, new treasures of tenderness manifested themselves in her, and constrained you to love her still more.

My mother had a great affection for Lucien, and received him as his mother would have done. Christine was welcomed by her with equal cordiality. Joseph, who had then returned to Paris, and whom, in fact, each of the younger brothers considered as the head of the family, opened his arms to the young couple, and they were happy. A few days afterwards they set out for Germany.

During the short stay of Lucien Bonaparte and his wife in Paris they made an excursion to Versailles, and they allowed my mother no peace till she had consented that I should be of the party. As I had never seen Versailles I joined my solicitations to theirs and accompanied them. I cannot describe the terrible impression which this widowed and dismantled queen produced upon me. On beholding those vast halls, the immense salons, stripped and deserted, the dark corridors, and apartments still covered with gilding, apparently awaiting the finishing hand of pomp; all seemed to me so dreary and desolate that, though very young, I retained so vivid an impression of it, that when, in 1821, I went to reside at Versailles, I had a perfect recollection of the feelings produced by the melancholy and scandalous neglect of the residence of Louis XIV. I inquired in what state the palace was, and

when I learned that it was precisely what it had been under the Directory, I did not care to enter that royal habitation, wilfully forsaken by its natural guardians: I should have suffered much more from witnessing its forlorn condition in 1821 than I had done in 1796. The garden was the only object of my walk.

Lucien was but a short time absent. I never knew what he had been to do in this tour. His wife had accompanied him, as well as one of her cousins, named Boyer. On their return they lodged in Rue Verte, in the Faubourg Saint Honoré. Madame Bacciochi (Marianne Bonaparte) also lodged, I believe, in Rue Verte. Madame Leclerc, who had recently come from Milan, where she had been married, took a house in Rue de la Ville-l'Evêque. Louis and Jerome, too young to be left alone, were, the latter at the College of Juilly, and the other with his brother Joseph.[1] As for the latter, he had bought a house at the extremity of Rue du Rocher, almost in the fields, at least at that time. Since then so many buildings have been erected there, as everywhere else, that the site of Joseph's house is now almost in the heart of a new quarter.

The time of which I am speaking is still further removed from us by the rapid progress of events than by that of time. A week then exhibited the spectacle of a vast empire destroyed, an army vanquished and taken prisoners; we were accustomed to such events, and were not content with less. This period is the most glorious in the life of Bonaparte, and that he well knew when he dictated at St. Helena the finest pages of the campaigns in Italy.

The treaty of Leoben was signed, that of Campo-Formio had followed it, the congress of Rastadt was in preparation, when we where informed that General Bonaparte would soon return to Paris. My mother appeared to wait the moment with extreme impatience, I knew not at the time why; but I afterwards learned that the reason was as follows: My brother was agent for the

[1] And with his sister-in-law Madame Bonaparte, Rue Chantereine. He lived with both of them by turns. It was about this time that Josephine began to think of marrying Hortense.

contributions at Massa-Carrara, and had for his colleague M. Gabriel Suchet, brother of the Duke of Albufera. He is a kind excellent man, a cordial friend of Albert, and became ours too.

My brother lodged at the house of a Monsieur Felice, whose wife was a charming woman. General Lannes, whose division was near Massa, if not at that place, had remarked, as my brother also had done, that Madame Felice was handsome, and that it was not impossible to please her; he therefore took measures to ensure success. But the future Duke of Montebello stormed a town more easily than a woman — even an Italian. My brother played delightfully on the harp, sang likewise, spoke and wrote Italian as fluently as French, and made sonnets and *canzoni* on Madame Felice, not quite equal to Petrarch, and yet so good as to cause the heart of his fair landlady to surrender quietly at discretion; while General Lannes, who was also well aware that it was necessary to form a plan of attack, thought to play off the most irresistible of seductions by relating his battles and his victories; and, to tell the truth, this might have been more than enough to win a heart that was free; but Madame Felice's had struck its colours to all the accomplishments of Albert, and had surrendered more especially to his love, for my poor brother's head was completely turned. At length, one day, the lovers persuaded themselves that they could not live any longer annoyed in this way, on the one hand by a jealous and rejected swain, and on the other by an Italian husband, whose character was by no means so austere as to make him fret if his wife was fond of any other man than himself. The result of this cogent reasoning was, that they took post and left Massa, trusting to love for the consequences of that measure.

Next morning, when the forsaken husband discovered his forlorn condition, he began to weep, and ran to acquaint General Lannes with his mishap. On hearing it, the general gave such a bound in his bed, as had well-nigh knocked off the canopy. "Gone!" he cried; "gone! and together, say you?"—"*Si, signor generale.*"—"And

which way are they gone?"—"*Eh, signor generale, come vuole ch' io la possa sapere?*"[1]—"*Eh parbleu!*" replied General Lannes, leaping out of bed, and slipping on his pantaloons, at the same time eyeing Felice with looks of fury, "blockhead that you are! go and find out what road they have taken."

The poor husband sallied forth to make inquiries, and learned without much trouble that the fugitives had directed their course towards Leghorn. As soon as he had communicated this information to General Lannes, "Come along," cried he; "to horse! to horse! *Morbleu!* we shall catch them in a couple of hours. You shall shut up your wife; and as for this Corydon of a Frenchman, who has the impudence to run away with *our* wives, I'll get him removed. Come along, Felice; come along, my friend! Take heart! What the devil ails you? You are as pale as a sheet of parchment."—"*Si, signor generale; grazie tante, grazie tante, farò cuore, farò cuore.*"[2]

Whilst giving this assurance that he would *take heart*, his teeth chattered like castagnettes, as General Lannes himself afterwards told me. The fact is, that the poor fellow had no stomach for fighting my brother;[3] and that the general had frightened him out of his wits by asking what weapon he would take with him. At any rate, the scoundrel would have done better to fight than act as he did afterwards. General Lannes took the command of the party, and the husband, with his brother-in-law, a cousin, and I know not how many more, marched off under the protection of the banner of General Lannes. "*Ah! cugino Pasquale!*" said Felice to a little cousin; "*cugino Pasquale! che amico! che questo bravo generale! che galant' uomo!*"[4]

The fugitives were overtaken about mid-day. The

1 "Ah! general, how can I possibly know that?"

2 "Yes, general, many thanks; I *will* take heart."

3 My brother was a first-rate swordsman; my father, a pupil of Saint Georges, had been his master, as well as Fabien. My brother possessed a formidable advantage—he was left-handed.

4 "Ah! cousin Pasqual, what a friend! what a brave general! and what a charming man!"

stray sheep was carried back to her fold, and inhumanly separated from her companion. I believe that my brother returned to Carrara, and that Madame Felice was removed to another town. Thus far the affair had been gay enough; but now this Monsieur Felice, impelled by some demon or other, preferred a criminal complaint against poor Albert. It was this affair, of which I was then ignorant, though my mother knew of it, that tormented her exceedingly. She wished to know if General Bonaparte had any accusatory documents relative to this charge. My mother was always easily affected, and any fears which she might reasonably entertain were sure to be doubled by her imagination.

Bonaparte arrived at Paris. It would be very difficult to convey even a slight idea of the enthusiasm with which he was received. The French people are fickle, not very susceptible of constancy in their affections, but accessible to the sentiment of glory. Give them victories and they will be more than content; they will be grateful. This was clearly shown when General Bonaparte arrived at Paris at the period I am speaking of. It was a real triumph, to which nothing was wanting but the ovation; however, it had well-nigh cost him dear, as the following fact will serve to prove.

The Directory, like all authorities that are too weak and impotent to produce and to direct, though it was called the *Executive Directory*, regarded with jealousy, which soon generated into hatred, that feeling of love and gratitude manifested by the French people for their young hero. A single movement seemed to set in action those five men, not one of whom was capable of comprehending Bonaparte. Incapacity, corruption, and an unbounded ambition, disguised by republican masks, were the elements of the power which then ruled us, and which desired no glory but that of its immediate creatures. Bonaparte had emancipated himself since he had been sent to Italy, and his laurels and those of his army were *personal property*, as much as anything can legally be.

Barras left him unmolested to enjoy his renown;

Moulins durst not venture to call to mind that he had ever been a general to run a race of vanity with him. Roger-Ducos thought on all points like a good-natured man as he was; and Sieyes, habitually reserved, as everybody knows, did not deem it necessary to let loose his tongue expressly to anathematise. According to this view of things, what I have said above will appear rather contradictory. But to proceed to my *proof*.

On this occasion one of the five Directors governed singly the sentiments of the other four. He possessed not more talent, but more intelligence, than his colleagues, and boundless ambition, though he declared that he had none —a mere figure of speech, to which nowadays no value whatever is attached. This man was Gohier. At this period we had every day the bulletin of the directorial interior, because M. Brunetière, our friend and my guardian, was equally intimate with Gohier and visited him daily. My mother sometimes inquired the reason of his aversion for General Bonaparte; for, in regard to him, she was rather amusing. She assumed the right of saying what she pleased about him, but she did not like others to attack him, and the malicious things which M. Brunetière heard said of Bonaparte, and which he reported to us every day, roused my mother's anger against him and the Directory, which she cordially detested.

From this time the hatred of Gohier for Bonaparte displayed itself in all his words and actions. He would have patronised to his prejudice the most incapable of men; that is to say, a recommendation from Bonaparte would have been a sufficient reason with Gohier for excluding the person so recommended from an appointment had it depended on this Director. There certainly was a positive and primary cause of this hatred, which the 18th Brumaire strengthened and rendered implacable. What was that cause? I believe simply this: Gohier would have thought it highly conducive to the welfare of France, and more particularly to his own, to get rid, with the aid of the society of the Manège, of the four puppets

at the head of the government with him, and to make himself president, not of the Directory, as it was on the 18th Brumaire, but of the French Republic. This scheme the eagle eye of Bonaparte had detected. He had warned Sieyes most probably, and the admirable subtlety of the latter had foiled the plans of Washington the younger. Gohier was not deficient in talent, but that talent, which might have some merit before a tribunal, was reduced to a cipher in the extraordinary situation which fortune had permitted him to attain. For one may now venture to speak out: on looking at the list of the Directors of that period, if we except Carnot, a virtuous man, and a man of eminent abilities, and Sieyes, who, though his political career has not been quite straightforward, yet possessed merit, what were the chiefs who steered our poor vessel? Gohier felt, therefore, that he was superior to the Directory as it was composed after Fructidor; and as the sentiment of inferiority never presents itself to any man, he thought that he might seize the reins, which all other hands had suffered to fall and even to trail in the dirt. His plan was guessed, I repeat; and this was the cause of his truly violent hatred against Bonaparte. The reader will presently be convinced of this when I relate the conversation which M. Brunetière had with Gohier after the 18th Brumaire.

Be this as it may, had Bonaparte's vanity been ever so great it must have been satisfied; for all classes joined, as I have said, to give him a cordial welcome on his return to his country. The populace shouted, "Long live General Bonaparte! Long live the conqueror of Italy, the pacificator of Campo Formio!" The shopkeepers said, "May God preserve him for our glory, and deliver us from the maximum of the Directors." The higher class, *ungagged* and *unbastilled*, ran with enthusiasm to meet a young man, who in a year had been from the battle of Montenotte to the treaty of Leoben, and from victory to victory. He may have committed errors, and even grave ones, since that time, but he was then a colossus of great and pure glory.

All the authorities gave him magnificent entertainments; the Directory exhibited itself in all its burlesque pomp of mantles and hats with feathers, which rendered the meeting of the five members of the supreme power sufficiently ridiculous. But in other respects the *fêtes* were fine, and they had in particular the charm attached to things which are supposed to be lost, and which are recovered. Money circulated, and the result of all this was that everybody was pleased.

But one of the most magnificent entertainments, and above all one of the most elegant in its magnificence, was that given by M. de Talleyrand at the office for foreign affairs. He always displayed admirable skill in the arrangements of the entertainments which he gave; indeed, when a man possesses good sense he shows it in everything he does. He then resided at the Galifet Hotel, Rue du Bac, and, though the rooms were too small for the company assembled there that evening, the *fête* was admirable. All the most elegant and distinguished people then in Paris were there. My mother was absolutely bent on going. She was not quite well; but when she was dressed and had put on a little rouge she looked enchanting; and I can affirm that I saw that night very few women who surpassed her in beauty. We were both dressed alike, in a robe of white crape trimmed with two broad silver ribbons, and on the head a garland of oak-leaves with silver acorns. My mother had diamonds and I pearls. That was the only difference between our dresses.

In the course of the evening my mother was walking through the rooms, arm in arm with M. de Caulaincourt on one side and me on the other, when we found ourselves face to face with General Bonaparte. My mother saluted him and passed on, when the general advanced a few steps and spoke to her. My mother was, in my opinion, rather too dry: her ill-humour was not yet quite dispelled, but in her excellent heart there was nothing like rancour. It was the reverse with the general. Be this as it may, he appeared to look at my mother with admira-

tion. Indeed, that evening in particular she was truly captivating. The general spoke in a low tone for some seconds to the Turkish ambassador, whom he held by the arm. The Turk uttered an exclamation, and fixed upon my mother his large eyes, to which, when he chose, he could give a look of stupidity, and then made a sort of obeisance. "I told him that you are of Greek extraction," said Bonaparte to my mother, saluting her by way of adieu. Then, holding out his hand, he pressed hers in a friendly manner, and left us after a short conversation, which nevertheless drew the attention of the company, though it lasted but a few minutes.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Illness of my mother—Domestic details—M. de Baudeloque and M. Sabatier —A treble fright—Correction of a mistake of M. de Bourrienne—The 18th Fructidor.

SHORTLY before the 18th Fructidor I was exceedingly alarmed on account of the state of my mother's health. She was attacked by a disorder which is dangerous at any age, but particularly so at her time of life. M. Sabatier, M. Pelletan, and Baudeloque, came all three to see her almost every day for the fifty-two days that the danger lasted.

My affection for her gave me preternatural strength. Such an instance was never heard of as that of a girl of fourteen being able to go through the watching, fatigues, and alarms of fifty-two successive nights. The three skilful physicians whom I have just named could not believe it, though they were daily witnesses of it. For a moment I was afraid I should not have strength to support the burden. I was alone; my brother was still in Italy. I saw my mother turn her languid eyes to me, and the agonising expression which momentarily animated them indicated but too plainly how keen a sense she had of her situation. Her daughter was likely to be left an orphan, and alone! I had written to my brother, but had not received any answer. Every now and then my mother called to me in a faint voice to ask if letters had not arrived from Italy. I was obliged to answer in the negative, and I perceived that this reply distressed her exceedingly. All the agony of mind and body that

nature is capable of enduring was felt by my poor mother.

I was aware of my situation, but it had no horrors for me, excepting in the frightful futurity which I dreaded: my mother was all in all to me; it was she who engaged all my faculties. I suffered much, I wept much, during the six weeks that I passed by her pillow, but I never once thought of asking, "What shall I do when she is no more?"

We had many friends; I have no doubt that till my brother's arrival ten houses would have opened to receive me; but I repeat it, the thought never entered my mind. When I saw my mother so ill as to be unable to leave her bed my grief was at first violent; but when the symptoms of her painful disease became so aggravated as to threaten her life my despair overpowered me to such a degree that I had no energy and presence of mind beyond what was requisite to make me the most intelligent of nurses. I was everywhere. I could not bear my mother to take a spoonful of medicine or a basin of gruel from any hand but mine. She had an Alsatian *femme de chambre*, who was an excellent creature, and exceedingly attached to her. She was a clever nurse. But I was not satisfied with her attendance, though I could rely upon her. I could not sleep if I left her alone with my mother. If I lay down for a few hours anxiety kept me awake, and I returned at four in the morning, unable to finish the night in my bed.

At length the danger became so imminent that the physicians thought it no longer their duty to conceal the fact. It was, however, difficult to tell a girl who had no other support, no other good, but her mother, that she must die! Nevertheless, I heard this sentence, and I had strength to ask if there was nothing at all that could save her. "Nature and incessant attention, not only every minute, but every moment may do much," replied Baudeloque; "and therefore you must eat and sleep, that you may have strength." Sabatier was the one who understood me best. He did not say to me,

"eat and sleep," but he almost forced me to bathe two or three times a week. He recommended to me a generous and strengthening regimen, and he studied in particular to calm my poor head, which was no longer capable of bearing the weight of so many anxieties. I shall never forget his kind attentions; and when, thirty years afterwards, his daughter became my niece, I could not help expressing, though very briefly, my attachment to her father. A longer phrase than that which I used would have been in bad taste.

My poor mother was saved. The incessant attention paid to her at length triumphed over a disease which the whole faculty of Paris pronounced to be mortal. On the day that hope was restored to me a singular circumstance occurred. It was noon when the physicians informed me that my mother was out of danger. I wrote immediately to my brother, who was then in Italy: I was mad with joy. I could not take any rest either in the morning or during the rest of the day. In vain my mother begged me to go and lie down. "To-night I will," was my invariable reply. At length when the beloved patient was properly wrapped up for the night, when she had taken her jelly-broth, and her drawn curtains admitted only the faint light of a night-lamp, when I had kissed her brow, pale and cold as marble, and received her blessing, I retired to my little chamber, and prepared to go to bed for the first time for nearly two months, after thanking God with a grateful and deeply-affected heart. I lay down. No sooner was my head upon my pillow than I was overpowered with a stupor, rather than real sleep; I was in a kind of lethargy; not even a dream disturbed this state of complete quietude. I know not whether I have succeeded in conveying an idea of what I then experienced; but the reader may judge how violent the shock must have been which I received when I felt myself shaken by the arm, and heard a tremulous voice stammering in my ear: "*Mademoiselle! mademoiselle! oh, mon Dieu! mon Dieu! Madame — madame* has just expired in my arms!" I shrieked, and instantly was as wide awake as at the same

hour the preceding night. I pushed aside the trembling Josephine, flew to my mother's room, drew back with violence the curtains of her bed, threw myself upon her, called her, and my poor mother was awakened by me as I had myself been by Josephine. She had been fast asleep.

My mother was beginning to recover from an illness which did not leave her, I verily believe, above four ounces of blood in her veins. Her paleness, her emaciation, were truly frightful: she was naturally extremely fair, and her complexion was now of an alabaster whiteness, without the slightest rosy tinge. Lying thus between the white sheets, her face surrounded by cambric, the reflection of which added to her paleness, my poor mother had, indeed, a look that was rather alarming to any but her own child.

My poor mother trembled for above an hour with the fright which I had given her on entering her chamber. At length, towards morning, she fell asleep again. As for me, it is easy to imagine how I finished the night. I would not return to my bed, but placed myself in a large easy-chair, which served me habitually to sleep in; and there, though more composed, I could not get so much as an hour's nap. The shock had had such an effect upon me that Sabatier and Pelletan declared I had narrowly escaped two calamities, which might have been the consequence of Josephine's imprudence—epilepsy and death.

The winter which followed my mother's recovery was extremely gay, though the expedition to Egypt was resolved upon, and almost every family was occupied by its own particular interests. But, on the other hand, several thousand families were rejoiced by the return of brothers, sons, fathers, husbands; people began to breathe more freely; they were happier than they had been for three years past; they fully enjoyed this happiness, without thinking of the future, without considering that it was as liable to be broken as a glass. Almost the whole of the Bonaparte family was at Paris, collected about Joseph, who was now the head of it. The general did not willingly yield this prerogative: he could not by right

arrogate it to himself, but in fact he exercised it, and that without appeal.[1]

The 18th Fructidor had produced a strange effect on the different societies of Paris. Many emigrants, who had returned before that memorable day, built strong hopes upon the influence which they had over several deputies of the Council of Ancients, and still more of the Council of Five Hundred. It was the latter body in particular that it was their interest to win; but it was much more difficult to arrive at any result with young enthusiastic minds, thoroughly republican, and thoroughly resolved to maintain the revolutionary institutions. It was therefore towards the Council of Five Hundred that the eyes of all the projectors of counter-revolutions were directed; and there were then great numbers of them in Paris. All the agitators repaired to the capital, which became the focus of the different parties. A counter-revolution was never nearer than at this moment. To be fully convinced of this we ought to recollect the various political societies at that time not only tolerated but authorised; and among these societies it is well known the club of Clichy was one of the most powerful.

[1] On this occasion I shall correct a statement of Bourrienne in his Memoirs. By and by I shall have numerous observations to make on other matters which more nearly concern me, in the person of my husband, and in that of the Emperor. In the first volume Bourrienne quotes an entire letter, which he ascribes to Madame Bacciochi; in this he is wrong, for that letter is from Christine Boyer, the first wife of Lucien, as the mere perusal of it should have been sufficient to convince him. The inaccuracy which I have here pointed out is wholly unimportant, and I am sure that it has escaped the notice of almost all those persons who have read M. de Bourrienne's Memoirs. In order to recognise at first sight the precise position of each member of the Bonaparte family, a person must have been as intimate with them all as I was.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Sketch of society at Paris prior to the 18th Fructidor—Civic *fêtes* and dinners in the streets—Grecian and Roman fashions—Antique costumes—The *Incroyables* and the club of Clichy—Presumption and infatuation of the Faubourg Saint Germain—Portrait of Marshal Augereau—Consequences of the 18th Fructidor and deportations—Cruelty of the Directory—Bonaparte the author of the 18th Fructidor—Joseph Bonaparte in the Five Hundred—Madame Joseph—Mademoiselle Clary, Queen of Sweden—Bernadotte's marriage—Portrait of Joseph Bonaparte—The Bonaparte family—Bonaparte in Paris—Preparations for the expedition to Egypt—Portrait of Louis Bonaparte.

AT the period of which I am treating a company that was at all numerous offered a curious subject for study. The contemporary Memoirs do not describe sufficiently, for the information of future times, so singular an aspect of our Revolution. In the times of the Fronde and of the League the powerful nobles and the great vassals fought for or against the sovereign; history was on the field of battle, or in the interior of certain castles; the destinies of the people were not discussed, with an *almost* serious look, in a group of twenty young heads; the most important interests, the ministerial decisions, the most momentous matters, were not submitted to inexperience. Yet this is what we have long witnessed; this is what I should like to describe. I allude to the time when our reason, evidently deranged, though our character was wonderfully fine, set us a playing at parades for the amusement of rational people. Why not treat more largely of the national feasts, given from a good motive, but rendered ludicrous by the burlesque manner in which everything was conducted? This folly was intense,

and lasted long enough to be entitled to a place in the Memoirs of the time. I am the more decidedly of this opinion since all the actors in these droll scenes were of the number of our legislators. The republican mania did not confine itself to decreeing a republic. When the partisans of this state of things perceived that it was an Utopia not to be realised, they contented themselves with insisting on keeping the patriotic goddesses, the civic feasts. They dined in the open air, which was rather annoying when the wind was high; or in the street, which was always filthy. But people dined in common at Sparta; it was right, therefore, that they should dine in common at Paris: too happy in having escaped the black broth. At that period, too, young men ran about the streets as real *sans-culottes*, with a short tunic and a mantle, or rather an ample toga, for they borrowed a bit from all the republics; that is to say, to do mischief—

"Et Lycurgue enseignait à brûler les châteaux."[1]

But as for the republic *par excellence*, we shall talk a good deal about it, but we shall not take it for our model in any particular.

The company kept by my mother, and by a lady, or rather a gentleman, of her acquaintance (for the husband decided everything in that house), was composed of a great number of persons of diametrically opposite opinions. The artists and literary men talked and dreamt of nothing but a republic. Young men dressed completely in the Grecian style, as I have already observed, were seen gravely walking in their white togas with red borders, stopping under one of the entrances of the Louvre, and discussing beneath the porch the gravest interests of the State. They did not laugh, but held their chins with one hand, saluted each other by wagging the head, and strove, in short, to play the old Romans, even the youngest of them, as well as they could. Don't suppose that there were only two or three of these young

[1] Satire de Berchoux.

maniacs; there were two or three hundred of them at least.[1]

But the republican party was not the only one about the time of the 21st and 22d of May, and even the 4th of October: there were in Paris a great number of young men of good families who had adopted a costume peculiar to themselves. This was a gray frock-coat with a black collar, a black or green cravat, hair *en oreilles de chien*, plaited, powdered, and fastened up with a comb, and a thick cudgel in the hand. This was the costume of the Clichyans in particular. At the Manège, or at the society of the Rue de Bac, the wearer of a queue would have been knocked on the head, as was proved in more than one instance. As for the sham Greek, he was perfectly safe; people contented themselves with laughing at him to his face.

I have already observed that a numerous company was a truly curious subject for examination. My mother's drawing-room exhibited this species of Mosaic-work. The Faubourg Saint Germain, however, predominated in it, not merely in point of number, but because my mother held the opinions of that party. M. de l'Aigle, M. de Noailles, M. de Rastignac, M. d'Hautefort, Madame de Caseaux, Madame de Lostanges, Madame de Chalais, Madame de Contades, M. de Perigord, Madame de Lamarlière, Madame de Brissac, Madame de Vergennes, M. Alex. Delaborde, M. de Caulaincourt, Madame de Maillé, Madame de Fontanges, Albert d'Orsay, and many more, if not the intimate friends, belonged to the ordinary company at my mother's. Then came persons who held Clichyan opinions, and yet were not people of any note. Of this number I could name several personages who would not be best pleased about it at this time of day.

Some time after my mother's illness there was a great talk of a Revolution being about to take place. That illness had left behind a nervous affection, which required the

[1] It is well known that at the time of the Revolution, about the year 1794, the pupils of David, and of another painter, dressed themselves in the Grecian and Roman style.

utmost caution to spare my mother every kind of shock, whether moral or physical: the slamming of a door caused a palpitation for an hour. It was necessary also to avoid whatever was liable to excite any emotion. She who had been so strong and so courageous had now become timorous and faint-hearted. I trembled, therefore, in my turn on receiving this intelligence. "What," said I, "more alarms! Shall we never be at peace!" Alas! who would have thought that, thirty-two years later, I should be daily repeating, without the hope of better times, "What! more alarms!"

This Revolution was the 4th of September. As I do not mean to write a history of the Revolution I shall not dwell upon this day, but only touch upon it as far as concerns my friends. Many were included in that fatal list, on which any one might insert the name of him whom he wished to proscribe and persecute. I knew two unfortunate men who bore each other a grudge: their opinions were royalist and constitutional. On the 3d one of them proscribed; on the 4th he was proscribed; on the 6th both of them were. The most curious part of the business was, that they were each ruined by the other.

A point worthy of remark in our character is that levity governs and guides everything within us. But there is a class in France in which this levity attains such a degree of force, if I may so express myself, as to acquire consistence. Then, indeed, it ceases to deserve the name of levity; it becomes a reckless intolerable self-conceit—a confidence in every scheme—a contempt for all advice that borders on insanity. And do you know where this quality is to be found, in spite of experience which cries out to them—Make use of your reason? Why, in this same Faubourg Saint Germain. There you will find, together with the most brilliant valour, the most chivalrous honour, and a hundred distinguished qualities, this absolute lack of reason, judgment, and of brains. The most absurd plans rank first. They take no heed of the rumbling of the thunder; they dance upon a volcano, and make merry. You warn them, and they laugh you to scorn.

At the period of which I am speaking, about the 31st of August, my mother cautioned a friend of my father, who, having returned from emigration, had thrust himself in among these unfortunate Clichyans. My mother said to him, "I know that another Revolution is impending; it will, perhaps, be a sanguinary one, and here are my proofs." She put into his hands evidences confirming what she said. "Pooh!" replied M. de Béhaut, making a *pirouette*, "your news is a hundred years old. The Directory will never dare to attack such a party as ours. Recollect that all France is on our side. Had we not agreed to spare the lives of a few men, some seven or eight heads which we do not choose to strike off, that business would have been settled a month ago." His tranquil look was truly admirable. In this respect almost all the Clichyans were alike. Their eyes were covered with a bandage. In regard to their position and their weight, as an acting deliberative society, they had—what shall I call it?—an incredible presumption; and yet, on the same day, they knew nothing of the danger that threatened them four days afterwards. They wanted money to organise something or other in their club, and the person whom they had appointed treasurer went about seeking it, and applying for a loan of a thousand crowns to carry on what they called the administration. It was truly pitiful.

At length came that terrible day, the 4th September. I call it *terrible*, because the establishment of a republic in France, such as the fond dreams of our hearts represent it, may be impracticable, but still we had one, even in the Directory. After the institution of this dictatorship, or of this royalty in five volumes, tatters of this republic had daily fallen under the blows of the Directory itself and the anarchists; at any rate, some part of it was yet left. This solemn day utterly destroyed it. The republic, whose foundations had been cemented by the pure and glorious blood of the martyrs of the Gironde, had vanished, was dispelled like a dream; the blood of the victims alone had left reprobatory recollections.

The conduct of the Directory on this occasion displayed ability. That body acted at first with a cunning, and afterwards with a boldness, worthy of a better cause. In fact, the army of Italy exercised over us at that time the ascendency to which we bowed at a later period ; and General Augereau did but execute prescribed and circumstantial orders. He was a man who might possess that daring spirit which hurries along thousands of soldiers in its train ; but, for directing a political movement, for organising the simplest machination, he was a mere cipher. Not only was he a soldier, but his manners were those of a soldier ; everything about him betrayed the uneducated man. His vanity was, nevertheless, inordinate. We met him sometimes at a house where my mother visited a good deal, that of M. Saint Sardos. I confess that his manner not only excited in me that disgust which must be felt by a young female accustomed to see none but well-bred people, but there was superadded that which I experienced as a warm admirer of General Bonaparte on account of his campaigns in Italy ; it put me out of temper to think that this booby, as I called him, should presume in his pride to dispute the palm of glory with Bonaparte. My mother, who was not always of my way of thinking relative to Bonaparte, agreed with me in my opinion on this subject.

As to the consequences of that cruel day, they were such as might have been expected. The Directory triumphed as it had fought, in a cowardly and barbarous manner. It was well aware that royalty had been called for, not so much out of love to the royal family, as out of hatred to itself; the Directory knew this and took a base revenge. When I consider what France was when that body began to undermine the sacred edifice I cannot find in my heart any pity for such of its members as complained that they were duped on the 8th November ; their punishment was a great deal too mild.

The consequences of the 4th September gave us cause to regret deeply the proscription and exile of several of our friends. During many days we durst scarcely inquire

about persons for whom we felt an interest; and a new terror, as it were, reigned in Paris. The events of September communicated a rapid and painful movement to society in Paris. Almost every family mourned a relative or a friend. My mother was deeply afflicted; her opinions and her affections were wounded; there was more than enough to distress a good heart and a warm head.

The peal that gave the signal for the 4th September came from Italy; it was the hand of Bonaparte that rang it; he was determined to crush the royalist party in the assembly. The Clichyans, by refusing Joseph, and I believe Lucien, had incensed him; and from that moment, so Junot told me, he swore that the men of the guilty party, as he called it, should not see the close of the year while on their curule chairs. After the departure of the unfortunate proscripts, Joseph Bonaparte was nominated deputy of the Liamone to the Council of Five Hundred. He then completed the fitting-up of his pretty house in the Rue du Rocher, and prepared to receive company. He was expecting his mother and his youngest sister Caroline. Mademoiselle Désirée Clary had just married Bernadotte. We were at the wedding, which took place in a very plain manner in Joseph's house. Mademoiselle Clary was rich, and extremely pleasing in person and manners; Bernadotte made a very good match.

Of all Bonaparte's brothers none have been so erroneously judged, and that universally, as Joseph. I have read a multitude of memoirs, and everywhere found a false mask substituted for the real face of this man; so that it is this caricature and not himself on which judgment has been passed. Joseph, moreover, is not the only one of the family that I shall replace in his proper light; and this I can do with the greater facility, because all its members are as well known to me as my own relations, in consequence of an intimate association of many years at a period long anterior to their metamorphosis.

My brother was particularly intimate with Joseph. I know not when this friendship commenced; but I believe that it was at the time when my brother, in order to

escape the requisition, was at Marseilles and Toulon with Salicetti.

Joseph Bonaparte is one of the most excellent men that can be met with. He is good-natured, intelligent, a cultivator of French and Italian literature, fond of retirement, but not out of affectation. Much has been said, but to no purpose, relative to the weak conduct of Joseph at Naples and in Spain. I know not what he did, or what he could have done at Naples; but this I know, that in Spain he could do no better, because he went there wholly against his inclination, and it distressed him exceedingly to be obliged to go to that unhappy country, filled with troubles and discussions, where the dagger or the blunderbuss threaten you every moment,—a country where all the good that he did, and I am certain that he did a great deal, was accounted only as a duty performed. No, no; the man who has been good, honourable, virtuous, for a long series of years does not change all at once and become cowardly and even wicked. That cannot be true.

Joseph is handsome, very like the Princess Pauline. They have both the same delicate features, the same winning smile, the same kind look. Joseph has always been a great favourite with our family. At Montpellier, after his father had breathed his last in my mother's arms, Joseph came to live with his uncle Fesch, in the house of my parents. I mention this circumstance again because Joseph never forgot it; on the contrary, he always tendered me his hand to testify his gratitude for what my mother had done for him.

Madame Joseph Bonaparte is an angel of goodness. Pronounce her name, and all the indigent, all the unfortunate in Paris, Naples, and Madrid, will repeat it with blessings; yet she was never at Madrid, and knew nothing of that foreign land but from the accounts of it that were given to her. Never did she hesitate a moment to set about what she conceived to be her duty. Accordingly, Madame de Survilliers[1] is adored by all about her, and especially

[1] The name assumed by Prince Joseph. The Queen had taken it too, and used it in Germany, where she then resided.

by her own household ; her unalterable kindness, her active charity, gain her the love of everybody, and in the land of exile she has found a second native country.

She was fondly attached to her sister the Queen of Sweden. The latter is an excellent, and in my opinion an inoffensive creature ; but she has one defect which her present situation renders almost a vice—she is a mere cipher. Her character has no colour. Nay, more, she may easily be persuaded to do any person an ill turn because she is not aware of the drift of the procedure. For the rest, I recollect the Queen of Sweden being prodigiously fond of everything that was melancholy and *romantic.* The latter term was then unknown ; since one knows what it means it has not quite so strong a resemblance to insanity.

When she married Bernadotte she had a face of which I shall say nothing, because we were then thought to be exceedingly like each other. She had very fine eyes and a most pleasing smile. Lastly, she had not too much *embonpoint* as at the time of her departure for Sweden, and she was altogether a very agreeable person. She was fond of her husband, which was natural enough ; but that fondness became a downright annoyance to the poor Bearnese, who, having nothing of a hero of romance in his composition, was sometimes extremely perplexed by the part. She was continually in tears when he had gone out, because he was absent ; when he was going out, more tears ; and when he came home she still wept because he would have to go away again, perhaps in a week, but at any rate he would have to go.

Lucien and his wife arrived at Paris at the same time, I believe, as also Madame Lætitia and Caroline Bonaparte. The general came to Paris, and afterwards set out again for Toulon. The Egyptian expedition was in preparation. Applications from all quarters poured in from young men, who, in ignorance of the armament, but hoping that it might be for Constantinople or England, enrolled themselves in crowds. Everybody wanted to accompany it.

In sketching the different portraits of the Bonaparte

family, I have said nothing of Louis, Jerome, or Caroline. The two latter were very young at the period of which I am treating.

Louis Bonaparte was engaging at eighteen; subsequently his infirmities gave him the appearance of an old man before his time; this rendered him morose in appearance, and in reality miserable. He resembled the Queen of Naples when he was young and in health; there was the same cast of countenance, and the same expression in the look, when the features of the Queen of Naples were at rest; but as soon as they were animated by her smile or her look all resemblance vanished.

Louis is a mild, easy, good-natured man. The Emperor, with his whim of making kings of all his brothers, could not find one who would fall in with it. His sisters, on the contrary, seconded him, for they were devoured by ambition; but on this point the men have always shown a firm and determined will. Louis told him as much when he was setting out for Holland. "I will do what I like," said the young king to his brother. "Let me act freely, or let me remain here. I will not go to govern a country where I shall be known only by disaster."

The Emperor was absolute in his will. He sent Louis to Holland; the unfortunate young man went to experience a slow and cruel agony among its canals and marshes. The greater part of his present ailments proceed from that damp atmosphere, particularly unhealthy for a child of the south, like him. He obeyed, and his wife was destined there to feel the keenest anguish: her maternal heart was wrung by the death of her first-born.[1]

[1] The eldest of the children of Louis and Hortense Beauharnais died of croup at the Hague in 1804.

CHAPTER XXV.

Restoration of Society—Good company at public assemblies—Fashionable parties—The Bonaparte family at Paris—Portrait of Lucien—Bonaparte makes himself head of the family—Arrival of his mother and sister Caroline at Paris—Portrait of Caroline Bonaparte—Madame Bacciochi—Madame Leclerc and Paulette.

AFTER the 4th September our society presented a most singular aspect. Among the returned emigrants there were, as I have already observed, a great number of old acquaintances of my mother's, who, still full of apprehensions, and very just apprehensions too, were glad to find a drawing-room where, while they could talk with tolerable freedom, they met several noted characters of the day, old friends, young acquaintance, all upon the same footing, and talking in the same tone, because the mistress of the house held her sceptre with a firm hand, and would not suffer discussions to degenerate into quarrels. This was a meritorious mode of procedure at that time, when people made themselves hoarse with bawling whenever politics were mentioned.

At a former period people cured you of your sore throat by cutting it for you. They had now, however, got tired of this remedy, by far too heroic, as it is said, in modern medicine. We were no longer summoned before the revolutionary tribunal because we had an income of fifty thousand livres, because, to confess the truth, nobody had such an income, at least to appearance. The *Moniteur* indeed was no longer daily dishonoured by sanguinary lists; but there were yet left the Temple, the plain of Grenelle, and deportations; though the horizon had

cleared there were still heard, as at the conclusion of violent storms, those isolated peals of thunder which almost always follow the tempest.

Notwithstanding all this, people recovered their gaiety: they went to dine at taverns, they would dance at public gardens, or take ice at a coffee-house; for it avails us nothing to ennoble things by giving them other names, in order to impose upon ourselves. Verry's, the balls at the Richelieu, Tivoli, and Marbeuf rooms, as well as at the Pavillon de Hanovre and Frascati, were in fact no more than what I have mentioned above; but this did not prevent good company from flocking thither and seeking amusement.

Amidst this dissipated life, and those pleasures which were sought as diversions from the remembrance of so many past sorrows and so many apprehensions for the future, a strange meeting of opposite parties took place. It began in my mother's house, and, strange to tell, it was the Bonaparte family that first found itself face to face with the *ancien régime.*

To introduce things in their proper places I must here say something more about Lucien Bonaparte, with whom, as the reader has seen, I had recently become acquainted. Lucien's destiny has been more extraordinary, perhaps, than that of any of the members of his family. Almost till the 8th of November he remained in comparative obscurity, as the reader may have already inferred.

At the period I am speaking of, that is in 1797, Lucien might be about twenty-two years of age; he was tall, ill-shaped, having limbs like those of the field-spider, and a small head, which, with his tall stature, would have made him unlike his brothers had not his physiognomy attested their common parentage. Lucien was very near-sighted, which made him half shut his eyes and stoop his head. This defect would therefore have given him an unpleasing air, if his smile, always in harmony with his features, had not imparted something agreeable to his countenance. Thus, though he was rather plain, he

pleased generally. He had very remarkable success with women who were themselves very remarkable, and that long before his brother arrived at power. With respect to understanding and talent, Lucien always displayed abundance of both. In early youth, when he met with a subject that he liked he identified himself with it; he lived at that time in an ideal world. Thus, at eighteen, the perusal of Plutarch carried him into the Forum and the Pyræus. He was a Greek with Demosthenes, a Roman with Cicero; he espoused all the ancient glories, but he was intoxicated with those of our own time. Those who, because they had no conception of this enthusiasm, alleged that he was jealous of his brother, have asserted a wilful falsehood, if they have not fallen into a most egregious error. This is a truth for which I can pledge myself. But I would not with equal confidence assert the soundness of his judgment at this same period, when Bonaparte, at the age of twenty-five, laid the first stone of the temple which he dedicated to his immortality. Not naturally disposed, by the grandeur of his genius, to view things in a fantastic light, and attaching himself solely to their reality, Bonaparte proceeded direct to the goal with a firm and steady step. He had in consequence the meanest idea of those who kept travelling on, as he expressed it, in the kingdom of fools. From this rigorous manner of judging persons of ardent imaginations, it may be supposed that Lucien was smartly reprimanded whenever he addressed to him any of the philippics or catilinaria of the young Roman. He forgot that he himself, a few years before, whilst still in Corsica, had given proof of equally violent exaltation.

To the portrait of Lucien I shall add that of his wife Christine, though I have already spoken of her; but she was such an excellent creature that whoever writes her eulogy may be pardoned some repetitions.

Madame Lucien was tall, well-shaped, slender, and had in her figure and carriage that native grace and ease which are imparted by the air and sky of the south; her complexion was dark, and she was pitted with the small-

pox; her eyes were not large, and her nose was rather broad and flat: in spite of all this she was pleasing, because her look was kind, her smile sweet, as well as her voice: she was graceful, in short, and good as an angel. Her love for her husband rendered her quick in adapting herself to her position; in a few weeks she became an elegant woman, wearing to admiration all that issued from the hands of Leroi, Mademoiselle Despaux, and Madame Germon.

On his first visit to Paris Lucien made but a short stay there; on his return from Germany he and his wife settled in Paris, and lived at this period in Grande Rue Verte, Faubourg Saint Honoré.

Madame Bacciochi resided, like Lucien, in the Rue Verte. Madame Leclerc, who arrived from Italy soon after the period which I have just mentioned as that of the meeting of the family, took a house in the Rue de la Ville-l'Evêque. We formed, of course, nearly the centre of the Corsican colony, in the heart of Paris; thus not a day passed on which some of the brothers or sisters did not visit us, or we them.

Caroline Bonaparte, who was called Annunziata, and who came with her mother from Marseilles, was then twelve years old. Handsome arms, small hands, delightful in form and whiteness, small well-turned feet, and a brilliant complexion—such were the characteristics of her beauty, with the addition of fine teeth, rosy cheeks, very fair but round shoulders, a figure rather too robust, and a manner not very elegant. Caroline was in other respects a very good girl, and we were as much together as my more intimate acquaintance with Mademoiselle de Perigord and Mademoiselle de Caseaux permitted.

Caroline was placed in a boarding-school at St. Germain, with Madame Campan, not to finish her education, for it had not even been begun. Of Madame Leclerc we saw more than of any other in the family. She came every day to my mother, who was very fond of her, and petted her—that is the right word—by passing over with more indulgence than her mother the thousand-

and-one whims which were bred, gratified, and abandoned in a day. Many people have extolled the beauty of Madame Leclerc; this is known from portraits and even statues of her; still it is impossible to form any idea of what this lady, truly extraordinary as the perfection of beauty, then was, because she was not generally known till her return from St. Domingo, when she was already faded, nay withered, and nothing but the shadow of that exquisitely beautiful Paulette, whom we sometimes admired as we admire a fine statue of Venus or Galatea. She was still fresh on her arrival at Paris from Milan; but this freshness was of short duration: by the time she had lived a year in Paris she began to be a very different person from the Paulette of Milan.

At this period she was an excellent creature; it has been said since that she was malicious, and this report has been spread even by persons of her household: I know not whether greatness changed her disposition.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Attention of Bonaparte to the establishment of his family—Amours of Bonaparte, and a box at the Feydeau—Levity of Josephine—Coldness between my mother and Bonaparte—Marquis de Caulaincourt—The two brothers, Armand and Auguste—Madame de Thelusson and Madame de Mornay—Fashions—Bonaparte at Paris—Long and interesting conversation between Bonaparte and my brother—Projected expedition—Implacable hatred against England.

GENERAL BONAPARTE was anxious to see all his family comfortably settled at Paris before he left Europe; but knowing that the republican generals were charged with rapacity, he did not wish his family to live in such splendour as might afford cause for malicious interpretations. Nothing was more simple than the style of Joseph's house, though at the same time it was respectably appointed. Bonaparte had also laid down rules for the guidance of Madame Bonaparte's conduct in this respect; had they been followed this conquest over Josephine's spirit of dissipation would have surpassed the conquest of Egypt which he was about to undertake.

General Bonaparte, though younger than Joseph, and though his mother was still living, assumed from this moment the ascendency and authority of a father and head over his family. The instructions which he left for their guidance were truly remarkable, and surprised my mother; she had not seen him at her house since her decided quarrel with him on account of my cousin Stephanopoli.[1] Naturally proud, she was now as glad to avoid Bonaparte as a few years before she had been anxious to meet him. The behaviour of the young general

[1] He died lately, at Neuilly, in consequence of having cut a corn on his foot.

had deeply hurt her, and the indifferenee which he had shown in excusing himself completely incensed her against him; but, subsequently, her excellent understanding made allowances for all that might then have occupied the head of such a man. Bonaparte was about this time as fond of his wife as his nature allowed him to be when his faculties were wholly devoted to the vast projects he had himself conceived. No doubt he loved Josephine, but those who have asserted that he loved her more than he ever did any other woman have not followed him through his early life, nor discovered him in the character of a romantic lover; they have not seen him redden, turn pale, tremble,—nay, even weep. At the old Feydeau theatre there was a box, No. 11, in the first tier, which knew much more about this matter than they do.

His love for his wife was not of the same nature. He loved her, no doubt, but without making of her one of those divinities which dazzle the acutest understanding, and prevent it from perceiving any imperfection, moral or personal, in the beloved object. Besides, there was an ingredient in his composition that tempered the effect of it,—I mean the alleged gratitude which, more particularly about the time of his return from Italy, every one said that Bonaparte owed to his wife.

Madame Bonaparte showed a total want of prudence, not only in not imposing silence on those who spread this report, but also in giving it consistence by her continual confidences to a whole host of flatterers, and, above all, of intriguers, who never carried the weight of the secret more than an hour. I know that Bonaparte had been informed of the *authority*, if I may be allowed the term, which Madame Bonaparte gave to the absurd report which the enemies of Napoleon, and he had many already, circulated respecting him. It may easily be conceived, then, how his spirit must have been wounded when he saw himself the object of a contemptuous look, when he heard the expression, "It is his wife's influence that upholds him." This was false and ridiculous; but it was said; and whoever knew Bonaparte well must be aware that nothing

more was required to produce an extraordinary effect upon him.

Bonaparte was acquainted with the inconsistency of his wife; accordingly, he recommended her to abstain above all things from talking about politics — a subject which she knew nothing of, and which could not fail to lead to conversations liable to compromise him. "What you say is supposed to come from me," he would frequently observe to her; "keep silence, and then my enemies, and you are surrounded by them, will not have it in their power to draw silly inferences from your words."

I have already observed that the coolness which had taken place between my mother and General Bonaparte, instead of being removed, had been confirmed by my mother's keeping aloof from him. We met him but very rarely at the houses of his brothers; and he called on us only three times, I believe, during his stay at Paris. It is not, therefore, as an eye-witness that I relate what I have just stated; but we were perhaps better informed of all that passed in the house of the general than if we had spent an hour there every day. My mother, notwithstanding her irritation, had the strongest attachment to Napoleon; she well knew, without, however, admitting it, that she had been to blame in the foolish quarrel about our cousin Stephanopoli, and this inward conviction was sufficient to render her still more solicitous to know all that concerned the happiness or unhappiness of a child whom she had brought up. This information, moreover, came to us from a much more authentic source than anything that we might have learned from the complaints of the Bonaparte family. My mother, with her excellent understanding, knew that prejudice squints when it looks, and lies when it talks. Now, the whole family detested Madame Bonaparte. Was there a just cause for this hatred? We shall see by and by; all I say for the present is, that the enmity was strong, and, I believe, heartily returned.

My mother had found again an old friend in her

neighbourhood, M. de Caulaincourt, whose hotel, in the Rue Joubert, was not above a hundred paces from our house. To name him is sufficient to call to the minds of those who knew this excellent man all that is good, honourable, and honoured. The Marquis de Caulaincourt was likewise a friend of Madame Bonaparte; he had rendered her very great services. Of what nature I know not; but my mother knew: they must have been very important; for, subsequently, on the day that his two sons were presented to the First Consul, when M. de Caulaincourt described to my mother the truly remarkable reception which Bonaparte had given to himself and his sons, "Indeed, I can easily believe it," said my mother; "if even the merits of Armand and Auguste had not required this distinction the gratitude which his wife owes you would have imperatively commanded it." M. de Caulaincourt approached my mother's bed, for she was lying down at the time, and whispered to her for a few moments. "No, no," said my mother, "'tis not enough. Consider besides that your sons may aspire to everything. Where do you find men possessing their qualifications, and who, moreover, have at their age their military renown?"

M. de Caulaincourt was therefore a frequent visitor at the house of Madame Bonaparte. He gave her advice, which she listened to without following. He had a real friendship for her, and he proved it unequivocally; but Madame Bonaparte was excessively frivolous and fickle, with the appearance of good-nature. M. de Caulaincourt soon became disliked, though he was far from suspecting it; and subsequently, when, in consequence of my marriage, I formed one of the select circle at the Tuileries, I did not wound his heart by telling him that he was called the *dotard*.

M. de Caulaincourt was like a living tradition of a period which our fathers themselves considered as belonging to another age. His sons did not resemble him. Armand, afterwards Duke of Vicenza, had much of the look of his mother; Auguste was not like anybody,

neither was Madame de Saint Aignan, formerly Madame de Thelusson. As for Madame de Mornay, now Madame d'Esternau, she was a fine woman, and had much of the elegant carriage and manners of Armand.

M. de Caulaincourt was a man of such an original stamp that I should look around me in vain at the present day for any one resembling him. His features had been very delicate in his youth, and, though short in stature, he was perfectly well made. He had dark expressive eyes, to which, however, he seldom gave a severe expression. Many years have since passed, and yet my recollection of M. de Caulaincourt is so strong that methinks at this moment I can see him alighting from his horse at my mother's door on his return from Madame Bonaparte, Rue Chantereine. Never shall I forget that pretty pony, which fashion led him to choose: he paid all his visits upon horseback, like a country apothecary. Having formerly been a cavalry officer, highly esteemed in his corps, he had retained, in spite of time, reform, and revolution, the clumsy jack-boots, long queue, coat with large metal buttons, and waistcoat with flaps. Below these flaps hung two immense watch-chains, with such a collection of trinkets, that, when I did not hear the usual noise made by the horse and himself, their jingle, as soon as he began to ascend the stairs, apprised me of his approach. He was thoroughly convinced that the most graceful fashion of the day could not stand a comparison with his; and, to speak the truth, I should be puzzled to tell which was most laughable, he or a young *incroyable* of that time, buried in a muslin cravat two yards wide, with a coat, the skirts of which reached little lower than the hips, whilst pantaloons, ample enough to make a gown, gave to the lower part of his person the appearance of a woman. Add to this capricious costume hair falling in long thick cork-screws over the immense cravat, and a hat so extremely small that it was difficult to keep it upon the head, which it scarcely covered.

M. de Caulaincourt called me his daughter, and I called him my *little papa*. Armand, afterwards grand

equerry to the Emperor, and I were long accustomed, even at court, to call one another brother and sister. The portrait of the Duke of Vicenza has not been favourably drawn by prejudice and envy. He was not liked. He was perhaps rather too much convinced of his superiority over most of those who formed the military circle of the Emperor, and this conviction gave him an air of reserve which superficial persons took for haughtiness. He was clever, and had as much the manners of a gentleman as any man in France. His brother was far from being equal to him. Auguste's temper was by no means agreeable, and I have frequently heard my mother reprimand him severely for unpoliteness, even to the friends of his father. At this period both brothers were with their regiments.

General Bonaparte, after staying but a few weeks at Paris, when on the point of leaving Europe with the chance of never returning, had been influenced by a feeling of violent irritation. My brother, who in Italy had always kept upon the best terms with the general, had called to see him at Bonaparte's request. Albert went several times, and always came back more and more certain that Napoleon was excessively mortified by the course of events. "I plainly perceive," said Albert, "that his great spirit is too much compressed in that narrow centre, within which those needy Directors wish to confine it: it is a free flight in untrammelled space that such wings demand. He will die here; he must begone. This morning," added Albert, "he said to me: 'This Paris weighs me down like a cloak of lead!' And then he paced to and fro."

"And yet," replied Albert, "never did grateful country hail more cordially one of its children. The moment you appear, the streets, the promenades, the theatres, ring with shouts of *Vive Bonaparte!* The people love you, general."

While my brother thus spoke Bonaparte looked steadfastly at him. He stood motionless, his hands crossed behind him, and his whole countenance expressing atten-

tion mingled with the liveliest interest: he then began walking again with a pensive look.

"What think you of the East, Permon?" he abruptly asked my brother. "You seem to have had an excellent education; for your father, I believe, originally destined you for the diplomatic line, did he not?" My brother replied in the affirmative. "You speak the modern Greek, I believe?" Albert nodded assent. "And Arabic?" Albert answered in the negative, adding that he could easily learn to speak it in the course of a month.

"Indeed! Well, in that case I——" here Bonaparte paused, as if fearful that he had said too much. He nevertheless reverted to the subject a moment afterwards, and asked Albert if he had been at M. de Talleyrand's ball. "That was a delightful *fête*," he added; "my army of Italy would be very proud if it knew that its commander had received such high honours. Yes, the Directors have done things nobly. I should not have supposed that they had such skill in paying compliments: what luxury!" He walked about for a considerable time without speaking, and then resumed: "It was more magnificent than our royal entertainments of old. The Directory ought not thus to forget its republican origin. Is there not affectation in appearing in such pomp before those who, in fact, can counterbalance its power? I represent the army!" added Bonaparte; "yes, I represent the army, and the Directors know whether the army is at this moment powerful in France."

Nothing could be more true than this last insinuation of Bonaparte. At this period the army actually possessed great influence, and a distant expedition was already much talked of in public. Bonaparte asked my brother several questions relative to this subject. Albert answered that it was generally believed that the projected expedition was destined against England.

The smile that now played upon Napoleon's lips, as Albert afterwards told us, had so strange, so incomprehensible an expression, that he could not tell what to make of it.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Family of Junot—His education—His character—The battalion of the Côte d'Or—Junot a grenadier—Promoted to sergeant—The siege of Toulon—First meeting of Junot and Bonaparte—Extraordinary scene—Junot is Bonaparte's first aide-de-camp—Curious correspondence between Junot and his father—Remarkable dream—Muiron and Marmont—Death of Muiron—Wounds of Junot—Inexplicable errors in the Memorial of St. Helena—Politeness of Junot—Adventures of Madame de Brionne at Dijon—She presents Junot with her portrait—Baron de Steyer.

AMONG the young officers whom Bonaparte had introduced to my mother, when he was appointed to the command of the army of the interior, she distinguished one, as well on account of his manners, blunt without rudeness, and his open countenance, as for the extreme attachment which he manifested for his general. This attachment bordered upon passion. He manifested an enthusiasm so touching that my mother, whose elevated soul and loving heart were capable of appreciating all exalted sentiments, had immediately distinguished Colonel Junot; and from that moment she felt the sincerest friendship for him. I was then quite a girl, and never dreamt that the handsome colonel, with light hair, elegant dress, engaging countenance, and yet serious look, would come three years afterwards and, out of love, solicit the hand of the little girl whom at that time he scarcely noticed.

Of all the officers composing Bonaparte's staff Colonel Junot had followed a destiny the most adventurous and the most fortunate. He bore, in recent scars, the glorious marks of a valour which his bitterest enemies have not attempted to deny him. The general-in-chief had known

"England!" he then rejoined. "So you think in Paris that we are going to attack it at last? The Parisians are not mistaken; it is indeed to humble that saucy nation that we are arming. England! If my voice has any influence, never shall England have an hour's truce. Yes, yes, war with England for ever, until its utter destruction. Permon, if you choose I will take you with me; you speak fluently English, Italian, Greek. Yes, I will take you with me."

The conversation detailed here is the summary of what passed at five or six interviews. My brother heard in all quarters a variety of surmises concerning the projected expedition. The secret was long kept, but at length it was divulged; for Bonaparte, covetous of all kinds of glory, resolved to surround himself with the splendour which the arts and sciences impart to everything. He laid the Institute itself under contribution. An immense battalion accompanied the new Alexander to the banks of the Nile, whence it was destined to bring back a trophy more brilliant than any that blood can give to posterity.

As soon as my brother learned that the expedition was destined for so distant a country his resolution was taken; he arranged his affairs and prepared for his departure. My mother, when she knew it, threw herself in a manner at his feet, entreating him not to forsake her. Albert needed no second supplication; he remained.

how to appreciate it; and with the origin of his fortune were connected several remarkable acts, not only of courage, but also of honour and generosity. It was at the siege of Toulon that the general had become acquainted with him, and in a manner which, for its singularity, deserves to be related at length.

Junot was born at Bussy-Legrand, in the department of the Côte d'Or, on the 24th September, 1771, and it may be observed, by the way, that he received for a Christian name that of the saint whose festival happened to fall on the day of his birth: hence he had the most singular name perhaps in France—it was Andoche. What trouble this unlucky name gave in the sequel to the masters in the art of pleasing, who took it into their heads to celebrate the ruling powers!

Junot's parents were respectable *bourgeois;* his family was in easy circumstances. His mother's two brothers were, the one a physician at Paris, where he was deservedly esteemed, and the other first canon of the cathedral of Evreux, possessing good benefices, which he meant to leave to the elder of his nephews, M. Junot, who died receiver-general of the Upper Sâone. The abbé Bien-Aimé was a worthy priest, whose memory I revere. He died Bishop of Metz in 1806, regretted by his whole diocese, the poor of which called him *le Bien-Nommé.*

As, prior to the Revolution of 1789, the class of the *bourgeoisie* never put their sons into the army, Junot was destined for the bar. His education, begun at Montbard, under an excellent man named Heurté, of whom he frequently spoke with gratitude, was completed at the college of Châtillon-sur-Seine. Here he first became acquainted with Marmont, who was a pupil at the same college, and here they contracted that friendship which nothing ever diminished, though both of them pursued the same career. This friendship ended only with Junot's death in 1813.

Junot was a man of a very extraordinary character, which was not always duly appreciated by those about him, because he himself sometimes threw an obstacle in

the way, in consequence of a defect which really was a drawback from his many good qualities—I mean an extreme irritability, easily excited in him by the mere appearance of a fault. Whenever he had reason to suspect any one, more especially a person under his command, of neglect in matters connected with the service, he could not help reproving him for it, and the more harshly, as, in the like case, he would have been just as severe towards one of his own relations. On such occasions his frankness did not allow him one circumlocutory word.

Junot had a superior soul; he was a stranger to falsehood, and was endowed with a generosity which his enemies have endeavoured to represent as a vice, but which his numerous family, who for fifteen years had no other support than him, a great number of crippled soldiers, of widows encumbered with children, who received pensions and relief from him, will never call anything but the virtue of a noble heart.

He possessed in an eminent degree the qualities of a good son, a warm friend, and an excellent father. I recollect Mr. Fox telling me one day how he was struck the preceding evening, when leaving the opera-house, on seeing Junot paying as much attention and respect to his mother as he could have done to the first peeress of England.[1] How many college friends, how many indigent relatives, has he succoured and saved! How many ungrateful persons are there to whom he was a patron, a brother, and whose fortunes he made!

Junot doted on his children. Who can know, as I have done, all that anxiety, so strong and so tender, which he felt even in the midst of personal danger! What letters he would write me! How affecting they were for their candour and ingenuousness! At one time he would inquire whether his boy had cut his tenth tooth. At another he would say—"But when shall you wean little

[1] Mr. Fox meant by no means to satirise France by appearing to think it admirable that a son should give his arm to his mother. It was the extraordinary care and attention that struck him, as he himself acknowledged.

Rodrigue?" And then his girls, what were they doing? were they grown? did they work at their needle? These details may appear trivial; but those letters were written under the fire of the enemy, amid the snows of Russia, or perhaps an hour after receiving a wound, which had not even been dressed. I preserve all those invaluable letters. They shall descend as a sacred inheritance to my children.

Having begun life with the Revolution, Junot was absolutely one of its children. He was scarcely twenty when the first roll of the drum was heard. A war-cry rang throughout the kingdom; the most discreet panted for combat; all were tired of repose. Had not Junot been my husband I should tell how he became all at once a young Achilles. Suddenly smitten with a passion for arms, he wholly forgot the luxurious and indolent life which till then he had led. It was then that he entered into that celebrated battalion of volunteers of the Côte-d'Or, so renowned for the number of generals and great officers of the empire who sprang from its ranks. Its commander was the amiable and unfortunate Cazotte. After the surrender of Longwy, the battalion was ordered to Toulon to join the forces collected to retake it from the English. This was the most terrible moment of the Revolution. Junot was sergeant of grenadiers, which rank had been conferred on him upon the field of battle. Often, when relating to me the circumstances of the first years of his adventurous life, did he speak of that event as the most extraordinary that had befallen him. He said, with that accent which persuades because it is true, that, in the whole course of his career of honours, nothing ever threw him into such a delirium of joy as that which he experienced when his comrades, all of them as brave as himself, appointed him their sergeant, when their commander confirmed their appointment, and he was lifted on a tremulous platform supported by bayonets still dripping with the blood of the enemy.

It was about this time that, being one day on duty at the battery of the Sans-Culottes, a commandant of artillery, who had come a few days before from Paris to

direct the operations of the siege, in as far as the artillery under the command of Cartaux was concerned, applied to the officer of the post for a young subaltern, possessing both courage and intelligence. The lieutenant immediately called *la Tempête*—Junot stepped forward. The commandant scrutinised him with an eye that seemed already to look through the man.

"Pull off your coat," said the commandant, "and carry this order yonder," pointing to the most distant part of the coast, and explaining what he wished him to do. "I am not a *spy*," said he to the commandant; "seek somebody else; I shall not take your order." He was retiring. "So you refuse to obey?" said the superior officer in a sharp tone: do you know to what punishment you render yourself liable?" "I am ready to obey," said Junot, "but I will go in my uniform or not at all; and that is honour enough for those rascally English." The commandant smiled, as he looked steadfastly at him. "But they will kill you," replied he.—"What is that to you? You don't know me well enough to fret after me; and as for myself, 'tis all one to me. Well, I may go as I am, may not I?" He then put his hand into his cartridge-box. "Well, with my sword and these pills, at any rate the conversation shall not flag, if those fellows have anything to say to me." He then set off singing.

"What is that young man's name?" asked the superior officer, as soon as he was gone.—"Junot."—"He is sure to get forward." The commandant then noted down his name in his pocket-book. This was already an opinion of great weight, for the reader will easily have guessed that the officer of artillery was Napoleon.

A few days afterwards, being at the same battery of the Sans-Culottes, Bonaparte asked for some one who could write a good hand. Junot stepped out of the ranks and offered his service. Bonaparte recognised in him the sergeant who had already attracted his notice. He told him to place himself somewhere to write a letter, which he would dictate. Junot chose the corner of the

battery. Scarcely had he finished the letter when a bomb, fired by the English, burst at the distance of ten paces and covered him, as well as the letter, with mould. "Capital!" said Junot, laughing; "we wanted some sand to dry the ink."

Bonaparte fixed his eyes on the young sergeant; he was quite calm, and had not even started. This circumstance decided his fortune. He continued with the commandant of the artillery, and did not return to his corps. Afterwards, when the city was taken and Bonaparte appointed general, Junot asked no other reward for his good conduct during the siege but to be appointed his aide-de-camp,[1] preferring an inferior rank to that which he might have had by remaining in the corps; but in this case he should have been obliged to leave Bonaparte, and Junot could not make up his mind to that.

Junot was soon attached to his general with a devotedness that became adoration. Without taking the full measure of the giant who was before him, his penetrating mind set him down for a great man. I subjoin an extract from a letter, the original of which is in my possession; it was written in 1794, when Junot's father, alarmed at the resolution of his son, asked him for information concerning the man to whose fortunes he had attached himself. "Why have you left the commandant Laborde?[2] Why have you left your corps? Who is this General Bonaparte? Where has he served? Nobody knows him here."

Junot answered his father, and explained to him why he had preferred the service of the staff, especially that active service which he was likely to have with his general, to the more tardy results that would have attended his remaining with his battalion. He then

[1] Junot and Muiron, the latter of whom afterwards perished so unfortunately, were the first aides-de-camp that Bonaparte ever had.

[2] Afterwards general of division and commandant of Lisbon at the time of the conquest. It was Laborde who commanded in Oporto when Marshal Soult suffered himself to be surprised by the English, conceiving that it was the Swiss regiment which was crossing the river.

added: "You ask me who is this General Bonaparte. I might answer in the words of Santeuil:

Pour savoir ce qu'il est il faut être lui-même ;[1]

but this much will I tell you, that as far as I can judge he is one of those men of whom nature is sparing, and whom she throws into the world but once in a century."

When Napoleon set out for Egypt he passed through Burgundy on his way to Toulon. He stopped at Dijon, where my father-in-law then was, and the latter then showed him the letter which I just quoted.

"Monsieur Junot," said the general, "this only serves to confirm me in my conviction of your son's attachment to me. He has given me strong proofs of it, which have deeply touched me. You and he may therefore rely upon it that I will use all my power and influence to advance him in our adventurous career."

My father-in-law had then no occasion to ask who *this General Bonaparte* was. A quarter of an hour after this conversation, what Bonaparte had said to him was written in his pocket-book, and put into his left pocket, as near as possible to his heart. His adoration of Napoleon became from that moment almost as profound as that of his son.

Bonaparte kept the promise which he had made to Junot's father: he was to him a kind and useful patron; but then there were important obligations on the other side. We have already seen that Junot, deeply concerned at the arrest and accusation of Bonaparte, wanted to share his captivity; that he was repulsed from the prison by Napoleon himself, who convinced him that he might be of more use to him by remaining at liberty. We see, in fact, that the defence of Napoleon, addressed to the representatives of the people, Albitte and Salicetti, who had caused him to be apprehended, was Junot's writing: there are merely a few notes to it in Bonaparte's hand. After the liberation of the general, Junot accompanied him to Paris. There he constantly shared his poverty,

[1] In order to know what he is you must be the man himself.

and always divided with him what he received from his family.

"The galleons are not yet arrived," Bonaparte would say to my mother, when he called to see her, with a long face, and a gray frock-coat, which has since become so famous, but was then a very shabby concern; "the Burgundy diligence has not yet arrived. If it do not come to-night we shall have no dinner to-morrow, at least if you don't give us one, Madame Permon." What Napoleon called the galleons was a remittance of two or three hundred francs, which Junot's mother now and then sent to her son. This he divided with the general. "And I always have the larger share," said Bonaparte.

When Napoleon, after the 4th of October, was invested with the command of the army of the interior, he took other aides-de-camp. Marmont was one of them; and at this period he, Junot, and Muiron were the privileged persons of his staff. Junot and Muiron were on the most intimate terms. They were for some time the only two officers attached to General Bonaparte. Their friendship was not affected by the addition of Marmont to their little staff, though, as I have already observed, Junot and he had been educated at the same college.

It was a very remarkable point in Junot's character, or rather in his heart, that he was as weak and superstitious in regard to his dearest friends as he was rash and reckless of his own person; so that whenever a battle was at hand he was distressed about the fate of his friends till he saw them again. On the evening before the battle of Lonato, after having been on duty the whole day, and riding perhaps fifty miles, carrying orders in all directions, he lay down exhausted with fatigue, but without undressing, that he might be ready at the shortest notice. During the day he had thought a great deal about Muiron and his situation. Muiron had formed plans for his future establishment, which he had communicated to Junot. He meant, at the end of the campaign, to apply for leave of absence, that he might go to Antibes, for the purpose of marrying a young widow

residing there, of whom he was enamoured, and who possessed some fortune. It was therefore natural enough, that Junot's slumbers, receiving a tinge from the impressions of the day, should present to him similar joys, but in a different form.

No sooner was he asleep than he dreamt that he was on a field of battle, covered with dead and dying. He was met by a powerful masked knight on horseback, with whom he fought; this knight had, instead of a lance, a long scythe, with which he struck at Junot several times, and wounded him deeply on the left temple. The battle was long; at length they closed. In the conflict the tall rider's visor or mask fell off, and Junot beheld a death's head; the armour then disappeared, and Death, with his scythe, stood upright before him. "I could not take you to-day," said he; "but I will take one of your best friends. Beware of me!"

Junot awoke bathed in perspiration; day began to dawn; the bustle which precedes a day such as that which was preparing was already heard; he tried to sleep again, but could not, he was so much agitated, and this dream produced an uneasiness which increased every moment; yet, singularly enough, his apprehensions were not directed to Muiron, and on that day his anxiety was exclusively about Marmont.

The engagement began. Junot received two wounds on the head, one of which left that fine scar which was long seen on the left temple, the other was near the nape of the neck; neither of these wounds appeared very dangerous, but there was a chance that the one on the temple might become so, in the state of mind in which he then was. The moment he came to himself he inquired after Marmont. He was not to be found. When the officer who had been to look for him returned, and imprudently told Yvan, who was dressing Junot's wound, that he could not find him, Junot, calling to mind his dream, was seized with a kind of delirium, which alarmed the surgeons the more because his blood had been for several days past highly inflamed. A messenger was

sent to acquaint the general-in-chief with what had happened; he went himself to his favourite aide-de-camp and strove to soothe him; but Junot would not listen to anything, and had not Marmont at that moment arrived from executing a commission given him by the general-in-chief (he had been, I believe, to Massena's head-quarters), Junot would probably have been attacked by tetanus. As soon as he saw his friend he became composed, and seemed to think that he had nothing more to apprehend. "Ah! there you are!" he exclaimed, taking him by the hand; "there you are!" He then examined him with the only eye that was uncovered to see whether he had received any wound, and smiled with satisfaction on perceiving no other traces of the battle but disordered hair, and clothes covered with dust and Austrian blood. All at once he was struck by the extreme gloom on Marmont's countenance; the image of Muiron presented itself to his mind. "Where is Muiron?" cried he; "Where is Muiron?" Marmont cast down his eyes, and the surgeon gave Heldt, Junot's valet-de-chambre, a significant look to enjoin silence. Junot understood them. "The wretch," cried he, "has kept his word then!" Muiron had actually fallen.

During the whole of the campaigns in Italy Junot accompanied Bonaparte in those fields of glory, and was not sparing of his blood; he was in all the brilliant days of Arcole, Lodi, Castiglione, Lonato, the Tagliamento, etc. He served his general and his country on the field of battle with all the zeal that could be expected from an attachment such as his. Bonaparte, who knew and duly appreciated him, employed him during the campaigns in Italy in other duties besides those of an officer of the advanced guard. The occupation of Venice, which required both great subtlety and extreme firmness, was entrusted to him; he brought back with him colours which his arm had assisted in taking, and his mission had, as we shall see, an entirely diplomatic object.

I have already observed that Junot lavished his blood for the glory of his country. I shall here mention a few

instances. During the campaign in Italy, at the battle of Lonato, he received, as we have just seen, a wound on his left temple; but the most frightful of his wounds was a gun-shot wound received in Germany when only a volunteer; it must have been terrible, to judge from the scar, which made one shudder. The pulsation of the brain might be perceived there; this scar was at least an inch long, and seven or eight lines in depth. At frequent intervals during the three or four years succeeding that campaign this wound would break open afresh in a manner equally singular and alarming, and, the blood flowing profusely from it, Junot ran the risk every time of bleeding to death. One day, at Milan, being at the house of Madame Bonaparte, where they were playing at vingt-et-un, Junot was sitting at a round table with his back towards the door of the cabinet of the general-in-chief. The general opened his door without being heard; he made a sign to be silent, and, coming up softly, laid hold of the fine light head of hair which the young aide-de-camp then had, and pulled it sharply. The pain was so acute that Junot could not suppress a faint cry; he smiled, but his face turned pale as death and then alarmingly red. The general withdrew his hand; it was covered with blood!

To a brilliant and creative imagination Junot joined an acute understanding that was most prompt in seizing any new idea the moment it presented itself to him. He learned everything with inconceivable rapidity. He was very ready at composing verses,[1] was an excellent actor, and wrote wonderfully well. His temper was warm, sometimes passionate, but never was he coarse or brutal; and, during the thirteen years of our union, I never witnessed such scenes as that which is described in the

[1] Here is a specimen. Playing one evening at chess with Queen Hortense, then Mademoiselle Beauharnais, after several games which he lost out of complaisance, Junot wrote these lines on the chessboard :—

Dans ce beau jeu je vois l'emblême
De tout ce que vous inspirez :
Fou celui qui vous dira "J'aime,"
Roi celui que vous aimerez.

Memorial of St. Helena; the Emperor could not have made such an assertion, or, in absence of mind, he must have mentioned one name instead of another. The picture of Junot running about in his handsome hotel, as he is alleged to have done in the Memorial, sword in hand, to pay his creditors, is absolutely ludicrous to all who were acquainted with Junot and knew how anxious he was to act in harmony with the elevated post which he occupied. This post, formerly so eminent under the Bourbons, was infinitely more important under the Emperor. The Governor of Paris had the command of nearly eighty thousand men; he was the only governor who ever had such great power, extending to Blois, and I believe even to Tours. All officers of distinction, foreign or French, who passed through Paris, were received by him. Every person of any renown who came to France was admitted to the hospitalities of the Governor of Paris; and, from the first day of his nomination, Junot strove to imitate the Duke of Brissac, if not in his two queues and his white scarf, at least in the politeness of his manners. This desire of standing well in his intercourse with the social world dates even much further back, notwithstanding Junot's fondness for the Republic and his aversion to ancient customs. I will subjoin an example.

When all the world was emigrating and the revolutionary tempest began to roar over every head, Madame de Brionne, mother of the Prince de Lambesc and the Prince de Vaudemont, was stopped when attempting to leave France, at a town, which I believe to be Châlons, where Junot happened to be with his regiment. It was said that Madame de Brionne was carrying with her the crown diamonds; she was the mother of the Prince de Lambesc, whose name was held in abhorrence by the people for his affair at the Tuileries; she belonged, moreover, to the house of Lorraine, and that was enough to render her suspected. She was therefore apprehended; but, thanks to Junot, this measure, which might have assumed a most alarming character for the object of it,

was productive of no other unpleasant result than the mere fact of her apprehension. Madame de Brionne was conveyed to the best inn in the town, and Junot persuaded the mayor's officers to go themselves and examine her. "She is a woman," said he; "you do not arrest her by virtue of a warrant, since you have no commission to do so; but you act out of patriotism; you have received information upon which you act; so far all is right. Consider, however, that your information may be false, and that your action then becomes the more vexatious, inasmuch as there is no just cause for it: you must act then as if you doubt whether you be right; and, besides, she is a woman and we are Frenchmen."

Junot was cheered with huzzas, and, in consequence of this harangue, it was resolved to proceed to the noble traveller, who, not having been forewarned, had well-nigh marred everything. She had thrown herself on a bed upon pretext of fatigue, but probably to avoid the ceremonial of bows and courtesies; she shrunk from the idea of desiring people such as she then saw to sit down in her presence. By a very simple accident, however, her stratagem was thwarted. The mayor being absent from the town, there came in his stead an extremely vulgar fellow, who, on entering the room, threw himself into an arm-chair, saying: "I beg your pardon, *citoyenne;* but I am heavy, you see [he was full two hundredweight], and by your leave I will sit down."

At this intrusion Madame de Brionne half raised herself on the bed, and lifted up her head with an expression which gave her a most gigantic stature of twenty cubits. "By what right, sir, do you interrupt my journey?" said she to the fat man who acted the mayor. "Is this the liberty people now enjoy in France? I insist upon your suffering me to proceed this instant." The fat man made no other reply to this application than to ask Madame de Brionne who she was and whence she came.

In relating this scene to me Junot said: "Never shall I forget the expression of Madame de Brionne's face; it

was not indignation; it was an almost unknown sentiment; it was stupefaction, madness—— She, Madame de Brionne, to be interrogated! Not only her name to be asked, but who she was! 'After all,' said the man of the commune, 'we must know what is your profession.' Madame de Brionne returned no answer, but it was evident how severely she suffered from the constraint. A young female who was near her seemed in a whisper to be striving to soothe her. At length, when she had been questioned for the third time as to her name and quality, she raised herself with that dignity which never fails to awe when it is inspired by the feeling of what one really is, and exclaimed, 'Marie Louise de Rohan, Countess of Brionne! As to the charge which you have the stupidity rather than the infamy to allege against me—— Show them my baggage,' continued she, turning to a valet-de-chambre; 'they will see that the house of Lorraine possesses wealth without having occasion to rob the house of France.'"

"I was exceedingly pained at this scene," said Junot, "and when the clumsy booby had thoroughly convinced himself that Madame de Brionne had nothing with her that could even cause her to be suspected, I said sharply that she might be allowed to take some rest before she resumed her journey, which she wanted to do immediately. At any rate that woman had a noble and dignified courage which excited a lively interest in me, and I strove to screen her from the inconveniences of her situation."

Madame de Brionne was too much accustomed to good society not to be immediately aware of the attentions paid to her by Junot, which never ceased till her departure; and at a moment when she thought she should not be overheard, she said to Junot, "It must be very painful to you, sir, to wear that dress and to live with such people. It is no doubt your father whose opinions—— Alas! in these disastrous times it is no uncommon thing to see persons belonging to our class joining the rabble."

"Madame," said Junot, interrupting her with a smile, "I ought to prevent you from proceeding, and assure you

that my father and myself are of the same opinion ; and I must confess that I am a plebeian and a staunch republican."

The young soldier bowed. " Well then," said Madame de Brionne to the young lady who had previously spoken to her, " there are many of our young coxcombs at Versailles who would not have been either so polite or so attentive to a woman of my age."

" I heard it distinctly," said Junot, " though she spoke in a whisper ; and you will hardly believe that one of the things which most engaged my thoughts, after she had spoken of it herself, was to inquire her age. She was still a superb woman ; her arms and hands were admirably beautiful."

Madame de Brionne was about fifty at the time of this adventure ; if anything rather more than less.

" Sir," said she to Junot at the moment of her departure, " accept this token of remembrance ; I hope that it may serve to remind you of one who, on her part, will never forget what you have had the kindness to do for her." This token of remembrance was a snuff-box of white shell with a portrait of Madame de Brionne. Junot received it with warm expressions of thanks, and always kept it notwithstanding his wandering life. A singular little adventure, not a sequel to but a consequence of that which I have just related, occurred some years afterwards.

Some time after the victory of the Tagliamento, shortly before the treaty of Leoben, Junot, being at Clagenfurth with the general-in-chief, received a visit from a young German officer taken prisoner in the battle. He was handsome and a man of polished manners, but spoke French very ill. In other respects he was quite a gentleman, for he introduced himself as a relative of Madame de Brionne, in whose name he solicited Colonel Junot's good offices.

From what Baron de Steyer told Junot it appears that Madame de Brionne had always kept her eye upon him, and that the newspapers, in which his name frequently occurred, had furnished her with honourable intelligence

concerning him. She had recommended to the Baron, in case he should meet with such a misfortune as to be taken prisoner, to mention her name to Colonel Junot, and solicit his influence. The confidence of Madame de Brionne was not disappointed. Junot received the young officer in the most cordial manner; he asked and obtained for him his liberation on parole before the exchange of prisoners. My husband was much pleased with this mark of remembrance on the part of Madame de Brionne,[1] and justly so; for what is more amiable than to seize an occasion for a good action, and to prove that one has relied upon you?

This little story is not foreign to what precedes it, as the reader may perceive. The young man to whom it relates was the same who, from his fiery courage and impetuosity of character, obtained a few months afterwards in the field of battle the appellation of *La Tempête* from his brave comrades. It is to be presumed that this politeness, which must have been innate in Junot, for it could not have been taught him, was in the sequel rather developed than stifled by the remarkable circumstances in which he was placed.

[1] As it is probable that I shall make no further mention of Madame de Brionne I shall here introduce a little anecdote of her eldest son, the Prince de Vaudemont. Everybody knows that he was far from being like his mother and brother, and still less like his wife, who was and still is generally beloved. She was very ill, and Louis XVI., who took a lively interest in her welfare, one day asked the Prince de Vaudemont, "How is the Princess? What does Portal think of her?" "Why, 'faith, Sire, I should not like to be in her skin." Now only consider that this answer was given with the utmost *sang-froid*, and in a tone and accent absolutely inimitable.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Departure of Junot for Egypt—A general at twenty-seven—Injustice of the public towards Berthier—Mutual relations of the generals of the army of Egypt—Parties—Quarrel between Lanusse and Junot—Duel by torch-light on the bank of the Nile—Remarkable observations of Napoleon—His horror of duels—Letter from Bonaparte to Junot—Junot in Egypt after the departure of Bonaparte—Letter from Kleber—Departure of Junot—Junot and General Dumuy taken by the English—Indignation of an English captain, and noble conduct of Nelson—Lady Hamilton's oranges—Intimacy of Junot and Sir Sydney Smith—Junot returns to France and appointed Governor of Paris.

I HAVE traced the life of Junot from his entrance into the battalion of the Cote-d'Or; I have carried him to Longwy, Toulon, Italy, constantly devoted to Napoleon, as Napoleon was beloved by many of his aides-de-camp. Many generals have been strongly attached to the Emperor; many of them, by the ascendency of a mighty genius, though they were republicans, continued to love him even after his coronation, and to serve him faithfully; but nothing ever approached that blind, that passionate devotedness which several of his officers, at the head of whom was Junot, cherished for him. It was a fault in Napoleon not to believe the reality of the purity of this sentiment, and a still greater to show that he disbelieved it.

Junot was appointed general in Egypt. This promotion which is always a desirable thing, especially at Junot's age (he was then twenty-seven), was not so for him. He had to leave the man to whom he was affectionately attached, and was even removed from under his observation; the army was not numerous, the general officers had not the choice of their cantonments, and they were obliged to go whithersoever the service required.

It is well known that there was a complete schism between the chiefs of the army of Egypt; it was the camp of Agramant. Napoleon's party was the most numerous, but this division was extremely prejudicial. The personal danger of each party rendered it more irritable, more inflexible, especially towards the opposite faction. Kleber, Damas, and a great number of generals of extraordinary merit in other respects, affected to withdraw themselves from the authority of the general-in-chief.

Junot, as soon as he was appointed general, thought to earn a speedy immortality. But at that time it was not favour that made our generals; there was an emulation in glory, and promotion was attainable only by a brilliant achievement, a wound, or a skilful manœuvre. No doubt one might adduce some contrary examples, and name some incapable persons elevated through favour and patronage to high posts, from which the Emperor himself was subsequently obliged to dismiss them. But it may be asserted that in general, at the time of which I am speaking more than at any other period, excepting perhaps during the empire, merit was exclusively rewarded.

In this particular, as in almost every other, the Emperor was to be admired. He might, agreeably to his ideas of ambition, have sought to make tools for himself, and have attempted it at any cost; but let us examine all those whom he promoted; none of them were inefficient, but all possessed talents peculiar to themselves. Berthier, who had deceived the friendship and betrayed the confidence of Bonaparte, did not merit the epithet which he applied to him in the Memorial; it was a judgment dictated by a wounded spirit. Berthier was a hard worker, exact to the minutest matter in the details of his department (a point of the utmost consequence to the *scribbling*[1] portion of the army), always ready to answer the call of the general-in-chief. Amid the scorch-

[1] This was the Emperor's favourite word. I have often heard him say that the ancients were our superiors in this respect, that they had not a second army of *scribblers* in their train.

ing sands of Egypt, in the ice-bound deserts of Russia, Berthier was always so dressed as to be ready to appear before the General or Emperor at any hour of the night, however late. He was never found at fault. Afterwards he was, most certainly, far from being a bad man. He did good offices with the Emperor for those whom the ill-humour of the latter but too frequently ruffled. Poor Berthier! his tragic death ought to have obtained pardon for him. Not but that I think his fault immense, for I am far from excusing his ingratitude, in my eyes the most unpardonable of vices.

Among the generals who had placed themselves in absolute hostile opposition to the general-in-chief was Lanusse, the brother of him who lately commanded at Besançon. One day an expression so horrible, and at the same time so alarming for the safety of the army, was reported to Junot, that the favourable prepossessions with which the bravery of Lanusse had inspired him were from that moment utterly destroyed. "I hated him at last," said Junot to me when relating the circumstances of their quarrel. Amicable appearances were nevertheless kept up, but their hearts were estranged.[1] One day Murat, wishing to reconcile the two generals, invited them to dine with him, together with Lannes, Bessières, and I believe Lavalette, who was then aide-de-camp to the general-in-chief.

Dinner passed off agreeably, and the party afterwards went to play. During a game at *bouillotte* the conversation turned on a military operation which the army was about to make, when Lanusse suffered a sarcastic smile to escape him; it exasperated Junot. Bessières, who sat next to him, kept him quiet for a few moments. Lanusse, misinterpreting the tranquillity which prevailed around him, continued talking about the state of the army in very indecorous terms. In the midst of his observations he stopped short, and addressing Junot: "Junot," said he, "lend me ten louis! I am bankrupt."—"I have no money

[1] They had previously been intimate, and I know that Lanusse had even laid my husband under obligation. I take pleasure in acknowledging this.

before me," replied Junot drily. As he had a heap of gold before him, Lanusse, eyeing him steadfastly, rejoined, "How am I to take your answer, Junot?"—"Just as you please."—"I asked you to lend me ten of the louis that are lying before you."—"And I answer, that although there is money before me there is none for a traitor like you."—"None but a scoundrel could use such an expression," cried Lanusse, overcome with rage.

In a moment all were on their legs. "Junot! Lanusse!" cried they, endeavouring to sooth them, for, at the epithet employed by Lanusse, Junot had become furious. All at once he appeared calm. "Hearken, Lanusse," said he in a voice the mildness of which formed a strange contrast with his choleric trembling, "Hearken to me; I called you a traitor; I don't think you are so.[1] You called me a scoundrel; you don't think me one; for we are both brave. But, look you, we must fight; one of us must die. I hate you, because you hate the man whom I love and admire as much as God, if not more.[2] We must fight, and that immediately. I swear that before I go to bed to-night this affair shall be settled!"

All the witnesses of the scene were sensible that such words as had been exchanged demanded blood, and even life. But what was to be done? The general had proscribed duels; he would not have any in his army. If the affair were to be deferred till the next day he would know of it, and then it would be impossible to settle it. Murat's garden was spacious; it sloped down to the Nile. Torches were lighted, and there they might fight that very instant. It was nine o'clock and quite dark.

"What weapon shall we take?" said Junot.—"A pretty question!" said Lanusse. "Pistols, to be sure." Every one looked at him in astonishment. He had been

[1] Lanusse was remarkable for bravery, and one of the most distinguished officers of the army of Egypt.

[2] I have been advised to omit this expression, but I have not done so, because it was actually used by Junot, and, being acquainted with his religious creed, I know how to estimate it; he was not pious, but he was a believer.

insulted; according to the laws of duelling he had a right to choose the weapons that should be employed. All were therefore surprised that he should prefer one which, in Junot's hand, was sure to prove fatal. It is well-known that he was the most expert marksman with the pistol, not only in France but in Europe. At twenty-five paces he never missed an ace, and could always cut the ball in two, and that exactly in the middle, against the blade of a knife. "I will not fight you with pistols," said he coolly to Lanusse; "you are no marksman, you could not hit a barn-door. We ought to fight upon equal terms. We have our swords; let us go."

Bessières, who was Junot's second with Murat, whispered to him that he was a foolish fellow, as Lanusse was a capital swordsman, and he might perhaps stand no chance with him. "Consider, too," said Murat, "that it is for life or death." Junot would not listen to anything. They proceeded to the garden, and by the way Lanusse again raised his voice and employed some very offensive expressions with reference to Junot and the general-in-chief. "Lanusse," said Junot, "you are acting now like a man without heart, and yet you are a brave man; one would suppose you were trying to screw up your courage." Lanusse replied with a volley of abuse. Lannes silenced him. "Come along, Lanusse," said he in the energetic manner with which he adorned all he said; for at this period, and even much later, I never heard him speak two words but the third was an oath. "Come along; hold your tongue; you are going to cut one another's throats —what the devil would you have more? All that you say to him now is positively thrown away."

When they were on the ground the seconds examined it, and they had a good mind not to suffer the affair to take place on that spot. The Nile, after its periodical inundation, had left inequalities which were enough to trip a person up at every step. "If it were but daylight!" said Murat, "but you cannot fight here."—"Come on!" said Junot, "this is children's play." Pulling off his coat, he drew his sword, and Lanusse did the same.

Junot was a good fencer. He was nimble, brave, and perfectly cool; but, wishing to finish the affair, and taking his opportunity, he made a stroke at Lanusse, which cut the crown of his hat and spent itself on his cheek. Had he been without a hat he must have been killed. Taking advantage of the movement which had left Junot exposed, he gave him a back-handed cut, which laid open the abdomen and made a wound, the scar of which was more than eight inches long. Junot was removed with great difficulty. The nature of the wound was most serious in a country where inflammation of the intestines is the chief thing to be dreaded. But he was surrounded by persons whose talents and friendship quickly alleviated his alarming situation.

The general-in-chief was furious the next morning when Desgenettes, at Junot's desire, informed him of the occurrence. "What!" cried he; "are they determined to cut each other's throats? Must they go into the midst of the reeds of the Nile to dispute among the crocodiles, and leave behind for them the body of the one that shall have fallen? Have they not enough, then, with the Arabs, the plague, and the Mamelukes? You deserve, Monsieur Junot," said he, as though his old aide-de-camp had been present,—"you richly deserve putting under arrest for a month when you get well." Such were the very words of Bonaparte. He went to see Junot a considerable time after the affair, that is to say when Junot was almost convalescent; for at first Napoleon would not see him, saying that he was more culpable than Lanusse. However, the very next day, when apprised of the result and cause of the duel, he exclaimed, "My poor Junot! wounded for me! But then, the idiot! why did he not fight with pistols?"

When Bonaparte left Egypt Junot was at Suez, where he commanded. It is well known how secret the departure was kept. How kind and affectionate is the letter which he sent on this occasion to Junot! It is as follows:—

"*Bonaparte, General-in-chief, Member of the Institute, to the General of Brigade, Junot.*

"I am leaving Egypt, my dear Junot, and you are too far from the place of embarkation for me to take you with me. But I shall leave orders with Kleber to let you set out in the course of October. Be assured that, in whatever place and in whatever situation I may be, I will give you positive proofs of the affectionate friendship which I have vowed to you.—Health and friendship.

"BONAPARTE."

Kleber wished to keep Junot, but he would not stay. He could not meet with a vessel to return to Europe; and it was painful to him to be far distant from his country and from the man who alone had enabled him to endure the separation. At length he spoke out with such energy and feeling that Kleber gave him permission to depart in the following letter:—

"*Kleber, General-in-chief, to the General of Brigade, Juneau.*[1]

"The feeling of gratitude which you express so well, and which attaches you to General Bonaparte, only augments the esteem which I entertain for you. You shall go, general, and I have ordered General Damas to furnish you with a passport immediately; it grieves me exceedingly that I cannot give you in any other way the assurance of my sincere and cordial attachment.

"KLEBER."

Notwithstanding the apparent frankness of this letter, Kleber caused his departure to be attended with unpleasant circumstances. A report was circulated in the army that Junot was carrying away the treasures found in the Pyramids by the general-in-chief. "He could not carry them away himself" (such was the language held to the soldiers), "and so the man who possesses all his confidence is now taking them to him." The matter was carried so far that several subalterns and soldiers proceeded to the

[1] An orthographical blunder would be nothing more than one might expect of Kleber, who did not pride himself on being able to write French; but it is surprising that he did not know how to spell Junot's name.

shore, and some of them went on board the merchantman which was to sail with Junot the same evening. They rummaged about, but found nothing; at length they came to a prodigious chest, which ten men could not move, between decks. "Here is the treasure!" cried the soldiers; "here is our pay that has been kept from us above a year; where is the key?" Junot's valet, an honest German, shouted to them in vain, with all his might, that the chest did not belong to his *chenerâl.* They would not listen to him. Unluckily, Junot, who was not to embark till evening, was not then on board. The mutineers seized a hatchet and began to cut away at the chest, which they would soon have broken up had not the ship's carpenter come running quite out of breath. "What the devil are you at?" cried he, "mad fellows that you are; stop! don't destroy my chest — here is the key." He opened it immediately, and lo!—the tools of the master carpenter of the ship.

A scene like this wounded Junot to his heart's core. To be suspected of such baseness was to him a deep injury; but to suspect his general of a *crime* of which he was less capable than any other—he, the father of the soldier! Junot deemed the charge beneath both of them. He could have proved that he had been obliged to borrow a thousand crowns for his return to Europe; but he should soon see again his own dear country, the man who was not less dear, and his family. In short, the feelings that crowded upon his ardent soul (so well fitted to enjoy all the happiness that he anticipated) neutralised his indignation; he quitted that ancient Egypt, from which he carried away nothing except glory, without regret and without remorse; and, turning his face towards Europe, thought of nothing but France.

The odious calumny, the stupid invention, relative to the treasures of the Pharaohs, had meanwhile found believers elsewhere, as well as in the army. The English, for example, had been simple enough to give credit to this story. A ship was even cruising off Alexandria; and the merchantman in which Junot had sailed was obliged to

bring-to at the first summons of the *Theseus* man-of-war, Captain Steele; while Junot and his aide-de-camp, Captain Lallemand, had not the power to make the least resistance, how well disposed soever they might have been to do so.[1]

Captain Steele was the most impertinent of men, and everybody knows that when the English take up the profession of impertinence they are adepts in it. Junot was a prisoner, and an unhappy prisoner; all that could aggravate the pain of his disagreeable situation was probably discussed overnight in the head of the captain, that it might be put in practice the next morning. Junot had with him General Dumuy, the oldest general of division in the French army; he was no longer young, and was invested with a rank which ought to have ensured him not only respect but honour, especially among military men. If he were a numskull, Captain Steele was less capable of discovering it, as Englishmen themselves told me, than anybody else. Well, poor General Dumuy was not only ill used, which was cruel, but hoaxed, which was infamous. Junot would not put up with any jokes, and I have no need to observe that it would have been dangerous to make the experiment with him. Captain Lallemand, on his part, was not more complaisant; one day he well-nigh threw overboard a petty officer who had amused himself by playing him a *trick*, as he called it. Accordingly, Junot and he were at least respected.

At length, after enduring for four months a treatment which daily became more harsh and insupportable, Junot spoke out, and with such effect that Captain Steele was obliged to tack about and carry his victims to Jaffa, to be delivered up to Commodore Sir Sydney Smith. I shall speak of Sir Sydney by and by; at present I shall only say that he was most polite to the prisoners, and particularly to Junot, but he could not keep them, and forwarded them by way of Cyprus to Arnetta, to be thence despatched to Toulon in the ship *Le Vaillant;*

[1] They left Alexandria at eight in the evening, and were taken about midnight by the English. "We were waiting for you," said the latter.

but it was necessary that an English officer should first go to Palermo to receive the orders of Nelson, who was there with Lady Hamilton.

The day after *Le Vaillant* had anchored in the harbour of Palermo, a very elegant barge, manned by a dozen rowers dressed in white, and wearing black velvet caps ornamented with a silver leopard, came to reconnoitre the frigate. Junot was in his cabin at the moment with General Dumuy. The captain of *Le Vaillant* went down to them and told them with the more arrogance, because he fancied that he was backed, "Come upon deck, gentlemen; our hero, the great Admiral Nelson, wishes to see the French prisoners." Junot eyed the captain, then, turning his head, he appeared to be looking round about him. "Am I to understand that it is to me and the general that you are speaking?" said he. The captain bowed. "And have you the courage to execute this commission with so much impertinence? Well, take back this answer, at least as far as I and my officers are concerned; go and tell your Admiral Nelson,—who to me is neither a hero nor a great man, for I am accustomed to a measure that would be far too large for him—go and tell him, that I am not his prisoner, but the prisoner of his Government; that were I his prisoner I would not obey an order given with the brutality with which you would treat curious beasts that you might have brought from Egypt, and of which you were the keeper. If Admiral Nelson wishes to see me he knows where to find me. Say further, he is my superior, his rank is higher than mine; had he civilly expressed a desire to see me I would have gone to him that instant. Now the insult is offered it is too late for him to recede. I pretend not to impose my opinions upon any one," continued Junot, turning to General Dumuy, who, from the commencement of the action, kept close behind him, jogging his elbow, and pulling a face that was enough to make the merriest cry, or the most sorrowful laugh. "I have said what I thought, and what I would do, that is all; you are at liberty to act as you please."

The good man, if he had had his own way, would have gone upon deck, and walked about somewhat after the manner of a white bear in his den. The captain delivered Junot's answer to Nelson, who had a spirit to feel the full force of it. Junot, in his spleen, had said what he was far from thinking, for he admired Nelson, and did not conceal it; but how can you abstain entirely from offensive language when a victorious enemy would insult you? It is to be presumed that Junot's conduct was appreciated by Nelson; for the same evening he sent him a large basket filled with fruit, preserves, and some bottles of claret. Lady Hamilton had added some oranges to the present. Junot rightly thought that it would show bad taste to refuse it; he therefore accepted it, and stamped his thanks with a gratitude which he really felt. After all, if what he had said to the captain was faithfully reported to the admiral, this tacit reparation of his affront, or perhaps of that offered by the captain of the *Theseus*, argues a great share of magnanimity in his character. Nelson, however, annulled Sir Sydney Smith's orders for the return of the prisoners to France, and they were conveyed to Mahon, there to await the answer of the Admiralty. That answer could not be doubtful, but it might be delayed some time, and to remain longer under the yoke of the captain of the frigate was beyond the bounds of human patience.

Sir Sydney Smith appeared to Junot under an aspect which, though different from that of Nelson, was not more encouraging in regard to social life, and the intercourse which there must be between two men living, if not under the same roof, on the same floor, and which was about to be established between them. General Bonaparte was not mistaken in regard to the real cause of the disasters consequent upon the long resistance of St. Jean d'Acre. In his mind, Sir Sydney Smith and those disasters were inseparable. Those around him, who so easily caught the reflection of his enmities and his friendships, when, like Junot in particular, they lived in his life, beheld in Sir Sydney a man to whom General

Bonaparte had a strong dislike, and to whom, of course, they took a dislike also. "Nevertheless," said Junot to me one day, "the Emperor always regarded Sir Sydney Smith as a man of honour, and he said as much; only he thought him mad; and he could not comprehend, he said, how a sensible man could attempt such insane things."

To two men formed to esteem each other the first moments were of course irksome; but this did not last long. Sir Sydney and Junot, when they became acquainted, conceived a high esteem for one another. Junot said that Sir Sydney was chivalry personified, with all its bravery and generosity. They passed together about two months, which would have appeared short to Junot had he not been anxious to return to France. Every consideration was absorbed by that desire, which became a real home-sickness. Sir Sydney perceived it, and strove to expedite his return to France, as if he had been his own brother. It was to the active interference of Sir Sydney Smith that Junot was indebted for the cartel of exchange, the original of which I have carefully preserved. It is scarcely necessary to remark that ten English prisoners were released in exchange for him.

Junot continued to cherish the most affectionate regard for the commodore. Notwithstanding the war, they wrote and sent presents to one another. In spite of all his efforts, however, Sir Sydney could not obtain the entire exchange of Junot, who could not serve against England till the business was finally settled.[1]

[1] The Editor cannot forbear expressing his conviction that the statements which the present chapter contains relative to the conduct of the captains of the *Theseus* and *Le Vaillant*, and "our hero, the great Admiral Nelson," are highly coloured by national antipathy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The returned Emigrants — Portraits from nature — MM. de Bouillé and Madame de Contades—Drawing-room scenes—My mother's ball—The rival beauties—Madame Leclerc's ears—My mother's conversation with Paulette—MM. de Perigord—Despreaux's assemblies.

I WILL devote this chapter to some details respecting individuals who formed a portion of my mother's circle of acquaintance, and who were distinguished in Parisian society, after their return from emigration.

Among the ladies who had recently returned to France, and who were frequent visitors at my mother's house, there was one who is still vividly present to my recollection as though I had seen her only a few days since. This was Madame de Contades, the daughter and sister of the MM. de Bouillé, who distinguished themselves at the affair of Varennes. Madame de Contades was a person whose appearance never failed to make a profound impression at first sight. She was not remarkable for beauty, but there was something very pleasing about her. There was an expression in her look and smile which I never observed in any but one woman besides herself. She was not gloomy, far from it; and yet one could scarcely venture to laugh in her presence unless she first set the example. When she turned round her goddess-like head, crowned with luxuriant black hair, and cast a look at any one, that look was a command which exacted obedience. Her hatred of Bonaparte was exceedingly amusing. She would not grant him the merit of deserving his military fame. "Pshaw!" she would say when my mother spoke of his victories in

Italy and Egypt, "I could do as much with a look." She was no less diverting when Bonaparte's sisters came under her review. She would not acknowledge the beauty of Madame Leclerc, any more than the glory of her brother. Her eccentric opinion on this subject once gave rise to a tragi-comic incident at my mother's house.

Bonaparte had just departed for Egypt; and the different members of his family, bright with the reflections of the glory he had cast upon them during his brief stay in Paris, had already commenced their novitiate of royalty. Madame Leclerc, who had a taste for absolute power, was nothing loth to unite the influence of her brother's reputation to that of her own beauty. That beauty indeed appeared so perfect that nobody ever thought of disputing it. As her dominion as yet consisted only of her beauty, she spared no pains to make the most of it; and in this she certainly succeeded, when she did not, as unfortunately too often happened, display the airs of an insufferable spoiled child. One evening my mother gave a ball at her residence in the Rue Sainte Croix. She had invited, according to her custom, the most select society of the Faubourg Saint Germain. As to the other party, the only individuals belonging to it were the Bonaparte family, and a few gentlemen, who, like M. de Trenis, were fine dancers, and were for that reason regularly invited by the few families who gave parties at that time.

Madame Leclerc informed us that she had prepared for the occasion a dress which, to use her own expression, she expected would *immortalize her.* This dress was a subject of the most serious consideration with her, at least a week before she was destined to wear it, and she enjoined the strictest secrecy on Madame Germon and Charbonnier.[1] She requested permission to dress at our house, which she frequently did in order that she might enter the ball-room with her dress completely fresh and in all its beauty.

Only those who knew Madame Leclerc at that time

[1] A milliner and a hairdresser, at that time much in favour.

can form any idea of the impression she produced on entering my mother's drawing-room. The head-dress consisted of *bandelettes* of a very soft fine kind of fur, of a tiger pattern. These *bandelettes* were surmounted by bunches of grapes in gold ; but the hair was not dressed so high as it is now worn. She was a faithful copy of a Bacchante, such as are seen in antique statues or cameos ; and in truth, the form of Madame Leclerc's head and the classic regularity of her features emboldened her to attempt an imitation which would have been hazardous in most women. Her robe of exquisitely fine India muslin had a deep bordering of gold ; the pattern was of grapes and vine leaves. With this she wore a tunic of the purest Greek form, with a bordering similar to her dress, which displayed her fine figure to admirable advantage. This tunic was confined on the shoulders by cameos of great value. The sleeves, which were very short, were lightly gathered on small bands which were also fastened with cameos. Her girdle, which was placed below the bosom, as is seen in the Greek statues, consisted of a gold band, the clasp of which was a superbly cut antique stone. She entered the drawing-room without her gloves, displaying her beautiful white round arms, which were adorned with bracelets formed of gold and cameos. It is impossible to describe the effect her appearance produced. Her entrance seemed absolutely to illumine the room. The perfect harmony in every part of the beautiful whole elicited a buzz of admiration, which was not very complimentary to the other ladies present. The gentlemen all thronged round her as she advanced towards a seat which my mother had reserved for her, for Paulette was a particular favourite of my mother's, who indeed regarded her almost as her own child.

The ladies were all much piqued at the beauty and the elegant dress of Mademoiselle Bonaparte, the wife of General Leclerc. They whispered to one another, but loud enough to be heard by Paulette, that such an impudent display of extravagance was exceedingly unbecoming in a woman who had been almost in starvation only

three years before. But these expressions of female envy were speedily drowned by the admiration of the other sex.

The beauty of Madame de Contades was now entirely eclipsed, and soon after Madame Leclerc's entrance she found herself abandoned by her circle of admirers; or if any of them approached her, it was only to make some provoking remark complimentary to the charms of Paulette. "Give me your arm," said she to a gentleman near her, and the next moment the Diana-like figure of Madame de Contades was seen moving across the drawing-room and advancing towards Madame Leclerc. The latter had withdrawn to my mother's boudoir, because, she said, the heat of the drawing-room and the motion of the dancers made her ill; though, I believe, the true reason was that a long sofa in the boudoir afforded her the opportunity of displaying her graceful figure and attitudes to the best advantage. This manœuvre, however, proved unlucky for her. The room was small and brilliantly lighted, and as Madame Leclerc reclined upon the sofa a stream of light descended full upon her head. Madame de Contades looked at her attentively; and instead of making any of the ill-natured observations which had fallen from the other ladies, she first admired the dress, then the figure, then the face. Returning a second time to the *coiffure*, she expatiated on its taste and elegance; then suddenly turning to the gentleman on whose arm she was leaning, she exclaimed, "Ah, mon Dieu! mon Dieu! how unfortunate that such a pretty woman should be deformed! Did you never observe it? What a pity it is!"

Had these exclamations been uttered in the drawing-room it is probable that the sound of the music and the dancing would have drowned Madame de Contades's voice, though she generally spoke in a pretty loud tone; as it was, every word resounded through the little boudoir, and the scarlet which suffused the face of Madame Leclerc was much too deep to improve her beauty.

Madame de Contades fixed her eyes of fire on Paulette, as if she would look her through, and the tone of com-

passion in which she uttered the words, "What a pity!" sufficiently informed Paulette that her triumph was at an end. All this (which perhaps I have described with rather too much prolixity) took place in the space of little more than a minute; but these details are necessary to show the mode in which the attack was managed, and the success with which a woman of ingenuity may avenge her wounded vanity. "What is the matter?" inquired some one who stood near Madame de Contades.—"The matter!" said she, "do you not see the two enormous ears which disfigure either side of her head. I declare if I had such a pair of ears I would have them cut off, and I will advise Madame Leclerc to do so. There can be no harm in advising a woman to have her ears cut off."

All eyes were now turned towards Madame Leclerc's head; not as before, to admire it, but to wonder at the deformity with which its beauty was disfigured. The truth is, that Nature must have been in one of her most capricious moods when she placed two such ears on the right and left of a charming face. They were merely pieces of thin white cartilage, almost without any curling; but this cartilage was not enormous, as Madame de Contades said; it was merely ugly, and its ugliness was the more conspicuous on account of the beautiful features with which it was contrasted. A young woman but little accustomed to society is easily embarrassed; this was the case with Madame Leclerc when she read in the faces of her surrounding admirers the effect produced by the remarks of Madame de Contades. The result of this little scene was that Paulette burst into tears, and on the plea of indisposition retired before midnight. Next morning my mother went to see her. She, of course, said nothing about the ears, which were then concealed beneath a nightcap trimmed with lace; for Madame Leclerc was in the habit of receiving visits, even the most formal ones, in bed. She took her revenge by assailing Madame de Contades, whom she certainly did not spare. My mother allowed her to go on for some time, for she was aware that she had been deeply piqued.

"I cannot imagine," said Madame Leclerc, "what can make that great tall May-pole such a favourite with all the men! I am sure there are many women much more attractive in the circle of your acquaintance. There was one who sat near her last evening in your drawing-room, whom I think much handsomer; and she was very well dressed too. She had a robe and Grecian tunic, just like mine. "But," added she, in as serious a tone as though she had been speaking of the most important affair in the world, "hers was embroidered in silver, and mine in gold. That did not become her: she is not fair enough for silver." Patience was not my mother's virtue; and on hearing this she rose from her chair, evidently displeased. "Paulette," said she, "my dear girl, you are crazy! absolutely crazy!" The person of whom Madame Leclerc was speaking was a little fat woman with a short neck and turned up nose, and so extremely short-sighted that she was continually winking her eyes. In a word, she was the very reverse of Madame de Contades.

"I assure you, Madame Permon, I think Madame Chauvelin an elegant woman; she is clever too, without being satirical."—"Whether Madame Chauvelin be elegant or not is a matter of very little consequence," replied my mother; "as to her cleverness, I know she has a good deal. But, my dear Paulette, you are strangely mistaken if you live in the belief that she is not satirical when anything of a ridiculous kind presents itself to her notice. She can observe, short-sighted as she is." This affair set Madame Leclerc for a long time in violent hostility to Madame de Contades; though I am sure the latter lady never thought of it from the moment she put on her shawl to leave my mother's party.

About this period M. de Talleyrand had persuaded a great portion of his family to return from emigration. His two brothers, Archambaud and Bozon de Perigord, came to France. The former had been forced to fly to save his life, and left behind him a wife and three children. His wife died shortly after his departure. M. Louis Perigord, the eldest of his three children, was a man whose

rare qualities rendered him an ornament to society. He enjoyed the favour of Bonaparte, who knew how to appreciate merit.

There was a lady, a friend of my mother, who like her had the courage to receive company and give balls at this time. This was Madame de Caseaux, wife of the president of the Parliament of Bordeaux. She was a distant relation of M. de Talleyrand. She had an only daughter, Laure de Caseaux, who was then the richest heiress in France. The fortune of M. de Caseaux was estimated at eight or nine millions of francs. Madame de Caseaux occupied the Hotel de Perigord in the Rue l'Université, which now belongs to Marshal Soult. There she gave, in the suite of apartments on the ground floor, the first splendid balls which took place in Paris after the Revolution. But these balls represented the Faubourg Saint Germain in all its purity; and I do not recollect having seen the face of any individual of the opposite party except Junot, and that not until after our marriage.

There was another house in Paris at which good company and agreeable parties were to be met, though money was paid for admittance. This was the house of Despréaux, the fashionable dancing-master. I was his pupil, and at first these assemblies consisted only of his pupils; but they soon became so fashionable that Despréaux was obliged to remove to a larger house in order to receive all who wished to subscribe to them. It was there I first met Mademoiselle Perregaux, before she was married to General Marmont. She used to be accompanied by a sort of governante, who, instead of having any control over her, appeared to be entirely submissive to her authority. Mademoiselle Perregaux was pretty, but my mother could never reconcile herself to the freedom of her manners. Madame Bonaparte sometimes brought her daughter to Despréaux's assemblies. Hortense de Beauharnais was then a lovely girl, but I will take another opportunity of drawing her portrait; it deserves to be more than a light sketch.

CHAPTER XXX.

The 18th of Fructidor—Hoche—Probable manner of his death—Madame de Re——c and Madame Tallien—Flags presented to the Directory by Junot —Madame Bonaparte—Junot escorts her to Italy—Mademoiselle Louise.

AFTER the 18th Fructidor we had a new reign of terror, which spread consternation through all our circle, and several of our friends, whose names were included in the declaration of Duverne de Presle, were obliged to leave Paris.

An event which took place immediately after the 18th of Fructidor overwhelmed us with grief, for we were intimately acquainted with the relatives and friends of the victim who was sacrificed. I here allude to the death of Hoche, which may be regarded as an event in the history of our Revolution. The loss of Joubert and Hoche have usually been regarded as military misfortunes, like the fate of Marceaux, and subsequently of Desaix, but the case was different. With his military talent Hoche combined extensive abilities of various kinds, and he was a citizen as well as a soldier. When he was sent to La Vendée he quelled dissension, more perhaps by his talents and conciliating manners than by his sword, though he could use it well. Like Joubert, he loved and revered his country. I did not know much of General Hoche personally, but since his death I have been furnished with some curious details respecting him. When his death was made known the public voice rose in an accusing outcry against the Directory. I have paid great attention to the circumstances which attended the death of Hoche; I

have carefully examined the events which preceded the 18th of Fructidor, and compared them with valuable documents which are in my possession. I am satisfied that Hoche was the constant object of the hatred of a party then unfortunately powerful, though acting in the shade. The most serious charge was brought against him, and yet he was not guilty. It was discovered that the sum of 800,000 francs had been embezzled, and it was alleged that the commander of the army of the Sambre and the Meuse had divided it among the officers of his staff. A lady for whom Hoche cherished a deep interest, and who is still living, received from him at the time letters in which he begged her to raise some money by way of loan, at any price. "Above all," said he in one of these letters, "I should blush if France knew that one of the generals-in-chief of her armies should be obliged to borrow money to replace the horses which have been killed under him by the enemy's bullets."

Nothing, it appears to me, can be more conclusive than the language of a man thus addressing a woman who possessed his entire confidence. The lady to whom these letters are addressed is, as I have already observed, still living; she resides in Paris, and she favoured me, only a few days before these pages were written, with another sight of the correspondence, to which she attaches the highest value.

In another of these letters General Hoche says, "Do they wish me to come to Paris to renew the scandalous scene of the 18th of June?[1] If they do I will come, and in my turn tear to pieces their embroidered coats. Let them not provoke me." Alas! the unfortunate general ought not to have provoked an enemy who was alike cowardly, criminal, and feeble. Scarcely one month elapsed after the date of this last letter and Hoche was no more. An almost unanimous voice pronounced sentence of murder against those who ought to have placed the civic crown

[1] He here alludes to the indecorous scene which took place between De Lahaye and another deputy, who actually fought until they tore each other's clothes, in the place where sittings of the legislative body were held.

on the head of Hoche instead of consigning him to the grave. As to my own opinion, I entertain a firm conviction that General Hoche died by assassination. I deemed it necessary to say thus much relative to this brave man. His tragical death forms a remarkable event in our revolutionary history. I must now revert to a few circumstances of anterior date for the better explanation of some facts which are to follow.

Shortly before the Revolution my father, in the course of his financial business, was engaged in rather a curious affair, which at the time was but little known, because one of the two parties concerned belonged to the Polignac family. While this affair was pending my mother was introduced to some of the individuals concerned, among others to Madame de Re——c, a natural daughter of the Marquis de St. A——n. When, in 1796, the revolutionary troubles had somewhat subsided, and people who had been dispersed in various directions once more thronged to Paris, my mother, to her great astonishment, one day met Madame de Re——c at Tivoli. The lady was splendidly dressed in an extravagant style of fashion. She was walking between two gentlemen; the one on the right was a *collet noir*, and the one on the left an *oreille de chien*. She was speaking with a *pa-ole pa-fumée*, and giving herself all the airs of a perfect *incroyable*. She seemed overjoyed to see my mother, who was rather a formidable person to be encountered by such a woman as Madame de Re——c. I recollect that she was put quite out of countenance by the somewhat satirical look of my mother, when she scanned her from head to foot with the cool self-possession of the true Parisian *élégante*.

When Madame de Re——c behaved naturally she was a lively and agreeable woman. She recovered her courage, and called on us next day. She told us a great deal about the Directorial court, with which she was well acquainted, and about Madame Tallien, who, according to her account, was the prototype of all that was fair and good in the world—a perfect divinity.

My mother was a woman, and a beautiful woman,

whose opinions were not in unison with those which were professed in the salon of Madame Tallien, yet she never withheld her admiration from other females when she felt that it could be justly conferred. My mother had been much struck with the beauty of Madame Tallien, and she knew too many facts relative to her excellent conduct at Bordeaux not to be convinced that all the praises conferred on her were well deserved.

The life of Madame Tallien was one of the most extraordinary and diversified I ever knew. She might have become the French Aspasia, and with much greater advantages than were enjoyed by the Aspasia of Athens, with whom her wit, her beauty, and her political influence may serve to establish a comparison. She certainly might have been appreciated much higher than Aspasia in spite of the refined taste of the Athenians, though neither of her husbands was a Pericles. The destiny of Madame Tallien was as singular as herself. She was born in Spain, where her father, M. de Cabarrus, a French banker, settled, and had acquired a great reputation. At twelve years of age Theresa Cabarrus was the loveliest of all the beauties of Cadiz. Her father sent her from home at that early age, because he was still too young to take upon himself the superintendence of so beautiful a daughter. She was seen about this period by her uncle Jalabert, who could not escape the fascination which the lovely Theresa, with a look and a smile, exercised upon every man who beheld her. He wished to marry her; but she gave the preference to M. de Fontenay, to whom she was united some time after. With a cultivated mind and intellectual powers of a high order, Madame Tallien would have possessed, even without her beauty, more than an ordinary share of attractions.

While she was at Bordeaux she composed a discourse on some abstract subject, which was intended to be read by way of a sermon; a custom which was at that time prevalent. She, however, had not courage to read it herself, and she requested M. Jullien to read it for her. She was present on the occasion, and the audience were much more attentive to her than to the heavy and monotonous elo-

quence of the person who delivered the discourse: she was dressed in a riding-habit of dark-blue casimere, with yellow buttons and collar and cuffs of red velvet. Upon her beautiful black hair, which was cut *à la Titus*, and clustered in graceful curls round her face, she wore, a little on one side, a cap of scarlet velvet trimmed with fur; in this costume her beauty was really dazzling. At intervals the expression of her countenance showed that she was a little out of humour at the manner in which the discourse was read, and on the following Decadi she read it herself in the church of the Franciscans.

Madame Tallien was kind and obliging, but such is the effect on the multitude of a name that bears a stain that her cause was never separated from that of her husband. The following is a proof of this. Junot was the bearer of the second flags which were sent from the army of Italy to the Directory. He was received with all the pomp which attended the reception of Marmont, who was the bearer of the first colours. Madame Bonaparte, who had not yet set out to join Napoleon, wished to witness the ceremony, and on the day appointed for the reception of Junot she repaired to the Directory, accompanied by Madame Tallien. They lived at that time in great intimacy; the latter was a fraction of the Directorial royalty, with which Josephine, when Madame Beauharnais, and, indeed, after she became Madame Bonaparte, was in some degree invested. Madame Bonaparte was still a fine woman; her teeth, it is true, were already frightfully decayed, but when her mouth was closed, she looked, especially at a little distance, both young and pretty. As to Madame Tallien, she was then in the full bloom of her beauty. Both were dressed in the antique style, which was then the prevailing fashion, and with as much of richness and ornament as were suitable to morning costume. When the reception was ended and they were about to leave the Directory, it may be presumed that Junot was not a little proud to offer to escort these two charming women. Junot was then a handsome young man of five-and-twenty, and he had that military look and style for which, indeed, he was always

remarkable. A splendid uniform of a colonel of hussars set off his fine figure to the utmost advantage. When the ceremony was ended he offered one arm to Madame Bonaparte, who, as his general's wife, was entitled to the first honour, especially on that solemn day; and offering his other arm to Madame Tallien, he conducted them down the staircase of the Luxembourg. The crowd pressed forward to see them as they passed along "That is the general's wife!" said one. "That is his aide-de-camp," said another.—"He is very young."—"She is very pretty.—*Vive le Général Bonaparte!—Vive la Citoyenne Bonaparte!* She is a good friend to the poor."—"Ah!" exclaimed a great fat market-woman; "she is *Notre-Dame-des-Victoires!*"—"You are right," said another; "and see who is on the other side of the officer; that is *Notre-Dame-de-Septembre!*" This was severe, and it was also unjust.

Junot escorted Madame Bonaparte when she went to join the general-in-chief in Italy. I am surprised that M. de Bourrienne has omitted mentioning this circumstance in his Memoirs. He must have known it, since he was well acquainted with everything relating to Josephine, and knew many facts of high interest in her life at this period, and subsequently. How happens it, too, that he makes no mention of Mademoiselle Louise, who might be called her companion instead of her *femme-de-chambre*? At the outset of the journey to Italy she was such a favourite with Josephine that she dressed like her mistress, sat at table with her, and was in all respects her friend and confidante.

The journey was long, much too long for Junot, though he was very much in love with Mademoiselle Louise. But he was anxious to join the army, for to him his general was always the dearest of mistresses. Junot has often spoken to me, and *to me alone*, of the vexations he experienced on this journey. He might have added to his circumstantial details relative to Josephine the conversation he is reported to have had with Bonaparte in Egypt;[1]

[1] See Bourrienne's Memoirs.

but he never breathed a word on the subject; for his character was always noble and generous. The journey to Italy did not produce the effect which usually arises from such incidents in common life: namely, a closer friendship and intimacy between the parties. On the contrary, Madame Bonaparte from that moment evinced some degree of ill-humour towards Junot, and complained with singular warmth of the want of respect which he had shown her, in making love to her *femme-de-chambre* before her face.

At a subsequent period, however, Madame Bonaparte thought no more about Mademoiselle Louise or the want of respect shown by the aide-de-camp and faithful friend; indeed, I believe she thought but little about Bonaparte himself. I shall by and by notice the subject which then absorbed all her thoughts.

Madame de Re——c often spoke to us about Madame Bonaparte, whom she frequently saw at the Directory when she was not exclusively engrossed by the charms of her garden of Armida. On this subject Madame de Re——c furnished us with some amusing particulars, from which Lucien and the whole family, but especially Madame Leclerc, drew very unfavourable inferences for the future happiness of their brother.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Moreau takes the command of the army of Italy—Championnet—The assassination of Rastadt—Destruction of the regiment of Schecklers—General Joubert—The two Suchets—Anecdote of Bonaparte, and the Ordonnateur Chauvet—The two sleeping nymphs—Bonaparte at vingt-et-un.

ON reaching Italy Junot served under Moreau, who took the command of 40,000 men, the sad wreck of our military force in Italy, and marched to meet the enemy. The movements of the Austro-Russian army commanded by Suwarrow were, however, better combined than his; the consequence was that Moreau was defeated in the Battle of Cassano, losing nearly all his artillery, and 15,000 men killed, wounded, or prisoners.

Championnet once more brought back victory to our standards by defeating General Mack and taking Naples; but the Directory determined to sacrifice the glory of one of her sons on the altar of his country, and Championnet was deprived of his command, arrested, tried by a court-martial, and was on the point of being shot. All this was because he resisted the designs of certain base and avaricious proconsuls. Championnet's force was consigned to the command of Macdonald, and did not join Moreau's army till after the battle of the Trebia, where we lost 8000 of our troops.

About this time, in the west of France, the Chouans were raising their odious standard, and the roads of La Vendée were drenched anew with the blood of Frenchmen. Our plenipotentiaries were massacred at Rastadt by the Schekler hussars, and, notwithstanding the indignation expressed by all France at that atrocity, venge-

ance was still very tardy in overtaking the assassins. The two councils were the first to render a melancholy tribute of honour to the victims. Who that saw that ceremony can ever forget its solemnity? Who can recollect without emotion the religious silence which reigned throughout the hall and tribunes when the vote was put? The president then turned towards the curule chair of the victim, on which lay the official costume of the assassinated representative, covered with black crape, bent over it, and pronouncing the names of Robertjot and Bonnier, added in a voice, the tone of which was always thrilling—

ASSASSINATED AT THE CONGRESS OF RASTADT.

Immediately all the representatives responded—

"May their blood be upon the heads of their murderers!"

This crime was long attributed to the court of Austria, but I have positive evidence that the Queen of Naples and the colonel of the Schekler regiment were the sole authors of the murder. I do not now recollect at what battle it was that the Schekler hussars were in such a situation as obliged them to capitulate. Their consciences told them, however, that they ought not to expect quarter. "Will you make us prisoners?" demanded the commander of the corps. He received for answer an exclamation of rage and indignation: "Defend yourselves, wretches!" The whole of the regiment was exterminated.

A new misfortune which befel France about this period was the death of Joubert, who was killed at the battle of Novi, at the time when, touched by the miseries of his country, he forgot her offences and felt nothing but her danger. Joubert was the friend of Championnet. On the latter being arrested, he sent his resignation to the Directory, and it was long ere he would again enter the service. When he did, he was first appointed to the command of the seventeenth military division, the headquarters of which were then in Paris, and a few weeks after, to the command of the army of Italy. The striking

similarity of situation between Joubert and Bonaparte is most remarkable. Both were of equal age, and both, in their early career, suffered a sort of disgrace; they were finally appointed to command first the seventeenth military division, and afterwards the army of Italy. There is in all this a curious parity of events; but death soon ended the career of one of the young heroes. That which ought to have constituted the happiness of his life was the cause of Joubert's death; namely, his marriage. But how could he refrain from loving the woman he espoused? Ah! who can have forgotten Zephirine de Montholon, her enchanting grace, her playful wit, her good-humour, and her beauty? What delicacy and spirit on her features! I think Joubert was very pardonable.

The mention of Joubert brings to my recollection a story about Bonaparte and the two Suchets (the marshal and his brother), who were the intimate friends of Joubert. The circumstance I am about to relate happened a little after the siege of Toulon. The town had been in the possession of the French for some weeks, and although his military and official duties might naturally have been expected to fill up his time completely, there were still some hours of the day which hung heavy on Bonaparte's hands. Chauvet, the commissary-in-chief, had some little affair of his own which screened him from the attack of ennui, but Bonaparte was entirely free. The director of the maritime works (or some such officer) had two very handsome daughters, on one of whom Chauvet bestowed all his attention. Junot likewise had contrived to fill up his time in a similar way; but Bonaparte, as I have said, was, in the midst of his occupations, the prey of ennui. One day he said to Chauvet, "I must go and dine with Suchet; tell him I am coming."

But for the better explanation of what follows it is necessary to premise that Suchet, then *chef-de-bataillon*, was in quarters at La Seille, a pretty little village, situate on the very lowest point of the Bay of Toulon. Suchet occupied a small house, the property of the father of the two fair maidens above mentioned, with one of whom

Chauvet was in love. The father and daughters were accordingly invited to dine with the party of young men, the eldest of whom had not reached his twenty-fifth year.

Suchet received his guest in his usual way, his face beaming with pleasure and good-humour, and seeming to say, "Welcome, welcome to my house!" His brother Gabriel acted the part of housekeeper, and provided an excellent dinner. Gabriel was also an amiable and good-tempered man, and did all he could that day to make eight or ten young madcaps happy. But as pleasure must have a term, it was necessary to think of retiring home. This, however, was found to be impracticable; for, whilst the company were enjoying themselves, there had been a great fall of snow, succeeded by a hard frost, which rendered the communication with the village impossible; it was, besides, very foggy. However, with punch, conversation, and laughter, they amused themselves for a few hours longer; but they had to wait for the dawn of day. There was but one bed in all the house—that in which the two brothers slept. What was to be done? It was then proposed that the two ladies should occupy it; but as the bedchamber was the only room in the house in which a fire could be lighted, they would not hear of it.

Bonaparte, who then abhorred what he called dull faces, proposed a game at vingt-et-un. It was usually the most laughable thing in the world to see him play at any game whatever; he, whose quick perception and prompt judgment immediately seized on and mastered everything which came in his way, was, curiously enough, never able to understand the manœuvres of any game, however simple. Thus, his only resource was to cheat. Well, for some time, vingt-et-un kept the company alive. But the cold soon overpowered the girls; slumber stole upon them, in spite of their efforts to banish it, and of the glances of Chauvet. At length they could hold out no longer, but threw themselves on the bed, which stood in a corner of the room, and fell forthwith into a sound sleep. Cold, as well as fire, acts as a soporific; and it was not long before all the company, except Bonaparte

and Gabriel Suchet, were snoring. Some stretched themselves on wooden benches, which stood round the chamber, and some on chairs, while Bonaparte and Gabriel spent the whole night, a winter's night,—that is to say, seven hours at least,—in playing at vingt-et-un. Bonaparte's eyelids never once drooped. Occasionally he would turn his eyes towards the bed and look at the young girls ; and when sometimes Gabriel Suchet pointed out the elegant position in which one of them lay, he would smile, but with an air of apathy, rather singular in a young man of twenty-five. The fact is, Bonaparte had but one real passion, and in that all his other feelings were absorbed.

I have heard Gabriel Suchet say, that notwithstanding the many years which have intervened since the occurrence of this incident he often thinks he still sees Bonaparte sitting in the arm-chair, one of his hands supporting his head, and the other stretched forward, as he pronounced the continually-repeated words, *carte-content.* Marshal Suchet fills too important a place in our military and political history to be passed over in silence. His portrait shall be given in its proper place. Here I have merely introduced him as the worthy friend of Joubert.

manners, the very essence of sociability, should have admired Madame Bacciochi in the way he did.

On the evening of the 9th of October my mother had a few friends with her. Madame de Caseaux, her daughter, Madame de Mondenard, my mother, and several gentlemen of our acquaintance were seated at a large round table playing at *loto-dauphin*, a game of which my mother was very fond. Suddenly a cabriolet drove up to the door, a young gentleman jumped out of it, and in a minute was at the top of the staircase. It was my brother Albert.

"Guess what news I bring you?" said he. As we were all in high spirits, and his countenance bespoke him to be so too, all sorts of absurd guesses were made, at which Albert constantly shook his head. "Nonsense!" said my mother, taking up the bag containing the little balls. "If there were a change in the government of the Republic, you could not make it an affair of greater importance."—"Well, mother," replied Albert seriously, "what you say now in jest may possibly be realised. Bonaparte is in France."

When my brother uttered these last words the whole party seemed struck motionless, as if by a magic wand. My mother, who had just drawn a ball out of the bag, held her little hand raised in the air, and the bag having fallen down, the balls were rolling about the carpet in every direction, without exciting the notice of anybody. Every one sat as if petrified. Albert was the only person who was conscious of the drollery of our position, and a burst of laughter, which he could not repress, brought us to ourselves. "Bonaparte in France!" exclaimed my mother; "it cannot be possible. I saw his mother this very day at five o'clock, and she had no idea of his return." —"It is nevertheless true," said Albert. "I was with Brunetière just now, when a messenger was sent by Gohier to fetch him. He desired me to wait till he came back from the Luxembourg; and he returned in about half an hour. He informed me that Bonaparte arrived two days ago at Fréjus. He added that he found

Madame Josephine Bonaparte at Gohier's, where she had been dining, and where she received the first announcement of this important intelligence. And," added Albert, speaking in a half-whisper to my mother, "I understand she was not so well pleased as might have been expected."

No language can convey any idea of the state of excitement occasioned throughout France by Bonaparte's arrival. From the 9th of October all around us was in continual agitation. On the 10th Josephine set off to meet her husband; but without knowing exactly what road he would take. She thought it likely he would come by the way of Burgundy, and therefore Louis and she set off for Lyons.

Madame Bonaparte was a prey to great and well-founded uneasiness. Whether she was guilty or only imprudent, she was strongly accused by the Bonaparte family, who were desirous that Napoleon should obtain a divorce. The elder M. de Caulaincourt stated to us his apprehensions on this point; but whenever the subject was introduced my mother changed the conversation, because, knowing as she did the sentiments of the Bonaparte family, she could not reply without either committing them or having recourse to falsehood. She knew, moreover, the truth of many circumstances which M. de Caulaincourt seemed to doubt, and which her situation with respect to Bonaparte prevented her from communicating to him. Madame Bonaparte committed a great fault in neglecting at this juncture to conciliate her mother-in-law, who might have protected her against those who sought her ruin, and effected it nine years later; for the divorce in 1809 was brought about by the joint efforts of all the members of the Bonaparte family, aided by some of Napoleon's most confidential servants, whom Josephine, either as Madame Bonaparte or as Empress, had done nothing to make her friends.

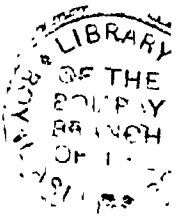
Bonaparte, on his arrival in Paris, found his house deserted; but his mother, sisters, and sisters-in-law, and, in short, every member of his family except Louis, who

had attended Madame Bonaparte to Lyons, came to him immediately. The impression made upon him by the solitude of his home and its desertion by its mistress was profound and terrible, and nine years afterwards, when the ties between him and Josephine were severed for ever, he showed that it was not effaced. From not finding her with his family he inferred that she felt herself unworthy of their presence, and feared to meet the man she had wronged. He considered her journey to Lyons as a mere pretence. M. de Bourrienne says that, for some days after Josephine's return, Bonaparte treated her with *extreme coldness.* As he was an eye-witness, why does he not state the whole truth, and say that on her return Bonaparte *refused to see her, and did not see her?* It was to the earnest entreaties of her children that she owed the recovery, not of her husband's love, for that had long ceased, but of that tenderness acquired by habit, and that intimate intercourse which made her still retain the rank of consort to the greatest man of his age. Bonaparte was at this period much attached to Eugène Beauharnais, who, to do him justice, was a charming youth. He knew less of Hortense; but her youth and sweetness of temper, and the protection of which as his adopted daughter she besought him not to deprive her, proved powerful advocates, and overcame his resistance. In this delicate negotiation it was good policy not to bring any other person into play, whatever might be their influence with Bonaparte, and Madame Bonaparte did not, therefore, have recourse either to Barras, Bourrienne, or Berthier. It was expedient that they who interceded for her should be able to say something without the possibility of a reply. Now Bonaparte could not with any degree of propriety explain to such children as Eugène or Hortense the particulars of their mother's conduct. He was therefore constrained to silence, and had no argument to combat the tears of two innocent creatures at his feet exclaiming, "Do not abandon our mother; she will break her heart! And ought injustice to take from us poor orphans the support of one whom

Providence has sent to replace him of whose natural protection the scaffold has already deprived us!"

The scene, as Bonaparte has since stated, was long and painful, and the two children at length introduced their mother, and placed her in his arms. The unhappy woman had awaited his decision at the door of a small back staircase, extended at almost full length upon the stairs, suffering the acutest pangs of mental torture.

Whatever might be his wife's errors Bonaparte appeared entirely to forget them, and the reconciliation was complete. Of all the members of the family, Madame Leclerc was most vexed at the pardon which Napoleon had granted to his wife. Bonaparte's mother was also very ill pleased; but she said nothing. Madame Joseph Bonaparte, who was always very amiable, took no part in these family quarrels; therefore she could easily determine what part to take when fortune smiled on Josephine. As to Madame Bacciochi, she gave free vent to her ill-humour and disdain; the consequence was that her sister-in-law could never endure her. Christine, who was a beautiful creature, followed the example of Madame Joseph, and Caroline was so young that her opinion could have no weight in such an affair. As to Bonaparte's brothers, they were at open war with Josephine.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

The 8th of November—My brother-in-law visits Bonaparte—My mother and I visit Madame Lætitia Bonaparte—The Bonaparte Family during the 8th—Their danger—Moreau appointed jailor of the directors—Moreau's character drawn by Bonaparte—M. Brunetière and Gohier—Moreau's harshness towards Gohier—Moulins—Madame Leclerc's correspondence with Moreau—Complicated intrigue—Bonaparte and Moreau—Astonishing scene at Feydeau—Fouché's measures—Singular ignorance of the Bonaparte family with regard to the events of the 8th of November—Madame Lætitia relates Napoleon's birth—M. de Sémonville—A curious conversation respecting Bonaparte between M. Brunetière and Gohier—The bunch of keys and Moreau's sword.

THE events of the 8th of November have been detailed by so many eye-witnesses, and even by the very actors in that great political drama, that I shall confine myself to a recital of facts, isolated to be sure, but connected with it, which are known but to few, and some of them to myself alone. For some days previous to the 8th Paris was violently agitated. All were apprehensive of some event, and yet no one knew of what he was afraid. Alas, we were soon to know the cause of our disquiet!

On the morning of the 8th Lucien quitted the house in which he resided in the little Rue Verte and established his headquarters at M. Mercier's, the president of the Council of Ancients, who then occupied a house beside the Hotel de Breteuil, near the Manège, and who was entirely devoted to him. It was then half-past seven o'clock, and as the decree of removal had not yet appeared Bonaparte sent almost every instant to know if the affair was proceeding. My brother-in-law went to him repeatedly to exhort him to patience. On the first visit the general's servant mistook his name, though he knew both him and

my brother well, and announced him as the citizen Permon. The general started at the name, for, in truth, he did not expect my brother. M. de Geouffre, however, received a welcome reception, and was presently sent back again to hasten the publication of the decree. My brother-in-law remarked that Bonaparte had a pair of pistols within his reach. Up to that moment he had been quite alone. Soon after my brother-in-law's first visit the Rue Chantereine began to be thronged so thickly with horses and people that scarcely any one could pass along it. At length, at half-past eight or a little later, the news that the decree was ready was carried to Bonaparte by my brother-in-law, and the general immediately mounted his horse to proceed to the Tuileries. On alighting there my brother-in-law met General Debelle, with whom he was intimately acquainted. The general was dressed in plain clothes, for he had run out on the first intelligence of the movement. "How comes it," said M. de Geouffre, "that you are not in uniform?"—"Why," replied the general, "I hardly knew what was going on; but the thing is soon rectified," and going up to a gunner who was standing by, "Let me have your coat, my brave fellow," said he, at the same time taking off his own. The gunner gave him his coat, and in this costume he attended General Bonaparte to the council-chamber.

The Revolution of the 8th was completed, and Paris was no longer agitated. We went to see Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, who lived with Joseph. She appeared calm though far from being easy, for her extreme paleness and the convulsive movement she evinced whenever an unexpected noise met her ear gave her features a ghastly air. In these moments she appeared to me truly like the mother of the Gracchi. And her situation added force to the idea; she had perhaps more at stake than the famous Roman matron! She had three sons under the stroke of fate, one of whom would probably receive the blow even if the others escaped. This she strongly felt.

My mother and myself remained with her a part of that tantalising day, and only quitted her on the restora-

tion of her confidence by Lucien's different messages, who frequently sent Mariani, his valet-de-chambre, to calm her disquiet as well as that of his wife. Leaving, then, these ladies in comparative ease, we proceeded to Madame Leclerc, who was but little frightened, because indeed she never reflected upon anything, but who nevertheless raised the loudest clamour of any. Every quarter of an hour she wrote to Moreau. She kept at that period a femme-de-chambre, a sort of *serva padrona*, who wrote to her dictation, and fine writing it was! When I arrived with my mother, she wished me to take the pen and write in her name to General Moreau. It was to ask the news for which she was crying out continually, and two hours later she was informed that Moreau was not at home, and that he probably would not return that night. On our departure she made us promise to revisit her early on the morrow. My mother willingly engaged to do so, because she loved Madame Leclerc dearly; for my part, I was at that time tenderly attached to Caroline, the youngest of Bonaparte's sisters, who was about my own age.

We had scarcely left her when we met my brother-in-law coming to tell us the news. He quitted us to rejoin Lucien, whom he wished not to leave during those perilous hours, for even now tranquillity was but apparent, and might be delusive to the Bonaparte family. The danger to which that family was exposed might have been even imminent in the night of the 8th to 9th. If the Directory had not been strictly guarded by the troops under Moreau, who had accepted the charge of jailer-in-chief to the captive directors; if Moreau had not kept them under even closer restraint than he was ordered to do; if he had not acted an ungracious part; in a word, if he had behaved as he ought to have done, then the Directory and the councils would have been the victors instead of the vanquished on the 9th of November. The event would, doubtless, have been unfortunate, but then their cause was that of the constitution; and if they had triumphed, all Bonaparte's brothers would have followed him to the scaffold; and their friends and partisans

would all have had a distant view of Cayenne, to say the least.

I do not recollect the exact period of Moreau's marriage; but I believe it took place a little after the epoch of the 8th of November. Bonaparte wished him to espouse his sister. Perhaps it was fortunate for both, for all three, that this union did not take place. Indeed, it is difficult to say whether Moreau would have been more trustworthy as a brother-in-law than he was as a brother-in-arms. Bonaparte had acquired an ascendency over him. The day after he met him with Gohier he went and presented him with a scimitar of surprising beauty, and enriched with precious stones—the gift of Mourad-Bey. Thus, at the epoch of the 8th of November, Moreau was entirely the slave of that charm which Bonaparte knew so well how to cast over those he wished to conquer. But let us return to the memorable day. The conduct of Moreau on that occasion was a long time a mystery to me. I could not at first incline to my brother's opinion, who constantly maintained that it was Moreau's extreme weakness of disposition which had thus placed him at Bonaparte's disposal; but I afterwards was confirmed in that opinion by what I heard fall from Bonaparte's own mouth. I was one day at Malmaison, in Josephine's bedchamber; Bonaparte came in for a moment; she handed him a small note; I believe it was from Madame Hulot, Moreau's mother-in-law, for he was then married. Bonaparte read the note, and, shrugging his shoulders, said, "Always the same! Ever at the mercy of those who choose to lead him! now he is the slave of a wicked old woman. It is fortunate that his pipe cannot speak, or she would lead that too!"

Josephine wished to make some reply. "Come," said he, "you must not defend him. You do not understand this matter." Here he embraced her. "If indeed it had been his lot to be led by such a gentle wife as you! But, his dragon of a mother-in-law and his shrew of a wife are very she-devils. I will not have any such about me." Why he made use of this last phrase I

know no more than others: I made no inquiry, because I naturally thought that it referred to something in the note. The above, however, are the words he used, and they made the greater impression on me because I myself was but just married.

It is well known that Moreau was the appointed and recognised commander of the troops who guarded the imprisoned directors. The most rigid surveillance was established over them. The following very curious details, connected with this subject, were furnished to us the day after by Brunetière, who certainly did not take them from the *Moniteur*.

M. Brunetière was the intimate friend of Gohier, and as soon as he learned what had happened he proceeded to the Luxembourg, where Gohier lived on a second floor in the Rue du Théâtre Français. When he reached the first sentinels he fancied himself upon a field of battle. His natural assurance—and he had his share—rendered him deaf to the repeated exclamations of "You cannot pass." Uneasy on account of his friend, he wished to see Moreau; he found that impossible; he retraced his steps to the Luxembourg; his agitation, his eagerness to visit his unfortunate friend, who might need his assistance, gave rise to suspicions. Moreau had given directions that all persons who presented themselves without a written order signed by him, and who insisted on seeing any of the directors, should be conducted before the commanding officer; and further, that all who were admitted either to Moulins or Gohier, should be required, on their departure, to swear that they were the bearers neither of a written or verbal message. Happily, Brunetière, seeing the turn things had taken, judged that he was most likely to serve his friend at a distance than he would be near his person, and made the best of his way from the Petit Luxembourg.

Gohier's conduct on the 8th and 9th was perfectly in keeping with his character. He refused to see Moreau when he came to him on the 8th of November. Moulins, too, had already treated Moreau with so marked a dis-

dain that those who were witnesses of his reception actually felt for him. The director-general regarded him for some moments with the most thrilling contempt, surveying him from head to foot, and pointing to an antechamber—"Remain there," said he, and left him.[1]

But the 9th was to develope the entire plan of the conspiracy (for we must make use of that expression) which was only announced by the events of the 8th. A fact sufficiently singular is the entire ignorance in which all that portion of the Bonaparte family who had no share in the action were placed. Everything had been managed so quietly in Paris; Fouché had so well taken his measures to prevent the escape of any intelligence that Bonaparte's mother and sister were obliged to obtain information of what was passing in the manner I have described.

The events of the evening had proceeded so quietly that the uneasiness of Madame Lætitia Bonaparte was entirely dissipated. It was thought the councils, after having sanctioned the sending back of three directors, and voted a dispensation with regard to his age, would proceed to the nomination of Bonaparte, and that everything would thus be settled. Albert thought that M. de Talleyrand would be one of the peace-making directors, and of this I was very glad, because his niece was a friend of mine.

My mother expressed her astonishment that Madame Lætitia had not been to see her daughter-in-law on such an emergency. "Signora Panoria," replied Madame Bonaparte, "it is not to that quarter that I look for comfort! It is with Julie, with Christine. There, indeed, I find maternal happiness; but for the other—no, no." As she finished the sentence, she compressed her lips and opened her eyes widely. This was a characteristic indication with her when what she had just spoken strongly interested her.

That very day I had occasion to remark the maternal tenderness of Madame Lætitia. We had no company to

[1] Moreau afterwards said he did not leave him; this is not the fact. Moreau was not received by the director-general.

dinner, and she conversed for hours with my mother with greater freedom than she had yet done since her arrival from Corsica. They both began to recall the days of youth. Madame Bonaparte was quite at her ease, because with us she spoke nothing but Italian; indeed, to say the truth, her French was not very intelligible. I recollect she this day told us that being at mass on the day of the fête of Notre Dame of August, she was overtaken with the pains of childbirth, and she had hardly reached home when she was delivered of *Napoleon* on a wretched rug. During her pregnancy she had experienced many misfortunes; for when the French entered Corsica many of the principal families, and among them that of Bonaparte, were constrained to fly. They assembled at the foot of Monte-Rotondo, the highest mountain in Corsica. In their flight, and during their sojourn among the mountains, they underwent many hardships. "I know not why," said she, "it has been reported that Paoli was Napoleon's godfather. It is not true; Laurent Jiubéga[1] was his godfather. He held him over the baptismal font along with another of our relations, Celtruda Bonaparte."[2]

Whilst this conversation was going on Madame Leclerc was seated on her favourite divan, admiring herself in a glass which was opposite to her, and having at length arranged the folds of her cashmere shawl she reminded her mother of all the sufferings they had endured during their flight from Ajaccio. Madame Mère had often talked over those events, but the recital never interested me so powerfully as on the 8th of November, when the space of six years had rendered so different the situation of those very children whom she, a lone feeble woman, had been forced to hurry away beyond the reach of the proscription, carrying the youngest in her arms, when overcome by fatigue they could no longer walk! and ultimately embarking with them in a frail vessel, landing on a shore which

[1] His nephew was afterwards prefect in Corsica. He was a relation of Napoleon.

[2] Daughter of Charles Bonaparte, the Emperor's uncle, and wife of Paraviccini, a cousin also of Napoleon.

increased their dangers. In recording this period of her life, the looks of Madame Bonaparte were as handsome as her language was eloquent.

At this point then, when a new era seemed about to open upon all his family, I will sum up the position of its different members during the revolutionary years. At the period when Paoli intended to deliver up Corsica to the English, it was well known that many of the most considerable families in the island were bent upon defeating his projects and seizing Ajaccio, St. Florent, and Calvi, the capital of Catalogne. The Bonaparte family were at the head of the Ajaccian movement, the Jiubégas were the prime instigators of that of Calvi, and the family of Gentily of that of Saint Florent. Calvi and Saint Florent rose in arms, but the influence of Paoli, which was immense, and the lack of means on the part of the insurgents, paralysed the execution of the plans of the Ajaccian patriots; and their leaders, after the abortive attempt, were compelled to seek safety in flight. The Bonaparte family, more the objects of hatred than any other, then quitted Ajaccio. Napoleon, who was one of the actors in this drama, concealed himself in the mountains in company with Moltedo,[1] both being disguised as sailors. He was arrested by Paoli's partisans, who descended from the heights to the number of four or five thousand;[2] he, however, contrived to escape, and traversing the Marzzolino (a small intermediate district), reached Calvi. From thence, being informed that his younger brothers and sisters had not yet arrived, he re-embarked for Ajaccio. Hearing, however, on his way thither that his mother had been fortunate enough to escape, he returned to Calvi, where he found his family established with the Jiubégas and the Paraviccinis, their friends and relations. Madame Bonaparte had then with her Joseph,[3]

[1] It is somewhat singular that Bonaparte, during his exile at St. Helena, does not mention one word of this remarkable period of his life.

[2] It was at this moment that the Government sent three commissioners to arrest Paoli; these were Salicetti, Delcher, and Lacombe.

[3] The following is the order of their birth: Joseph, Napoleon, Eliza, Lucien, Pauline, Louis, Caroline, and Jerome.

Eliza (Marianne), Jerome, Louis, Pauline, Caroline (Annunziata), Napoleon, and Fesch. From Calvi Madame Bonaparte proceeded to Marseilles, where she resided until her return to Corsica, which did not take place till her son was appointed general-in-chief of the army of Italy. Jerome was then living with General Casabianca, the commandant of Calvi, and Caroline was entrusted to the care of Paraviccini. Lucien had quitted his family one month when the Revolution broke out. M. de Sémonville, on quitting Corsica on his return to France, told the Committee of Public Safety, who had a great fancy for his own head, that, not wishing to part with it, he had brought Lucien with him. He had surveyed this youth with the eye of a clever man, who knew how to discern shrewdness and talent, because he himself was conspicuous for those qualities. He perceived that Lucien possessed an ardent soul, whose suppressed fire would have overwhelmed and destroyed him had he not taken him by the hand. Vexed at being destined for the ecclesiastical state,[1] for which he had not a single requisite, Lucien sought the friendship of M. de Sémonville, who was resolved to make him his private secretary on his appointment as ambassador to Constantinople. This was a praiseworthy action on the part of M. de Sémonville; but not at all surprising, for men of talent, whatever may be said of them, are generally good men. Lucien resided at Marseilles with Madame de Sémonville and her children, among whom was the fair Zephirine, who afterwards became Madame Joubert, and the Messieurs de Montholon, whose names are connected with misfortunes the most illustrious. Lucien thus escaped the captivity to which M. de Sémonville fell a victim.[2]

On the evening of the 9th we went to the theatre

[1] Lucien was destined for the ecclesiastical state at the request of Abbé Bonaparte, one of his relations, who promised to resign in his favour a Canonicat of the noble order of St. Stephen, at Florence. This abbé was still living at the time of the conquest of Italy. He resided at San Miniato.

[2] M. de Sémonville, as he was proceeding on his embassy, was arrested on his way to Novate, in the Grisons, upon the Lake de Guarda. It was the colonel who served him as an escort who betrayed him into the hands of the Austrians (July 1793).

Feydeau, which at that period was the most pleasant in Paris. Martin, Madame Saint Aubin, Mademoiselle Philis, Juliet, and Chenard performed there. I forget what was the first piece represented that evening, but *l'Auteur dans son ménage* was the afterpiece. The curtain rose, and the latter piece was proceeding very quietly, when all of a sudden the actors stopped and the *Auteur dans son ménage* himself appeared, and advancing in front of the stage, dressed in a morning gown of white dimity, exclaimed in a very loud voice, "Citizens! General Bonaparte has been nearly assassinated at Saint Cloud by traitors to their country." On hearing these words, Madame Leclerc uttered so piercing a shriek that immediately the attention of all the company was attracted to our box, spite of the agitation which the news had universally excited. Madame Leclerc still continued crying; and her mother, who doubtless was as much affected as she could be at the intelligence, endeavoured to quiet her, though she herself could scarcely hold the glass of water the box-keeper had handed to us, so great was her agitation.

On Madame Leclerc's recovery, we all proceeded to the residence of Lucien, conceiving that there we should hear some certain intelligence. My brother-in-law met us on the stairs, and from him we learned the full particulars of the event of which I have related a part, and to which I shall return in the succeeding volume. We then returned home, where we found M. Brunetière; this excellent man was quite downcast. He was much attached to Gohier, and that gentleman's misfortune afflicted him deeply.

A few days after the 8th of November, speaking of the events which had preceded and followed that day, Gohier alluded to Bonaparte with extreme bitterness; he even was so ridiculously blinded by passion as to refuse to allow him transcendent talent. "Oh, as to that," observed M. Brunetière, who was present, "it is too bad." "Not at all," rejoined Gohier, "the fault of one is often the cause of another's success; and if, when General Bonaparte came to Paris after Fructidor, Moulins, Barras,

and Ducos had been willing to second me, this pretty gentleman would have been in their and my situation. Is there any improbability in such a supposition?"—"But still," replied Brunetière, "it seems to me that that would not have been so easy a matter. What pretext would you have advanced?"—"What pretext? We might have advanced twenty, the very least of which would have brought him to a court-martial. First of all, the 18th of Fructidor, instigated by him—executed by his orders." "But it appears to me," said M. Brunetière, "that that event was the saving of the Republic."—"Yes, a pretty saving, truly! consummated by mutilating every portion of its administration, by striking at the very heart of the Directory, by strengthening our political clubs! He was the chief conspirator in that affair."

In speaking thus Gohier either forgot, or pretended to forget, that Carnot had been sacrificed to an intrigue to which General Bonaparte was a stranger! at least, I believe I have a perfect assurance of that fact; and as to the Manège and the club of the Rue du Bac, these are at least questionable points. M. Brunetière, whose judgment and discrimination were correct enough when he was not in anger,—which, however, was the case ten times out of twelve when he was engaged in a dispute,—observed to Gohier that it would have been impossible to cite any man before a court-martial on such trifling charges, especially one so loaded with laurels as was Bonaparte on his return from Egypt. "Hear reason, my dear Gohier," continued he; "we are both *avocats*, and can pretty well say what can and what cannot form the basis of an accusation." Gohier shrugged his shoulders, and exclaimed: "But the contributions which he levied in Italy! Was he not the exactor?"—"My dear fellow," replied Brunetière, "you are surely joking? Have you brought Massena, or Brune, or twenty others, who have been far more guilty in that respect than Bonaparte; have you brought any of these to a court-martial? Nor, indeed, has Bonaparte enriched himself more than they. The Cisalpine Republic made him, General Bonaparte, a present of some splendid

diamonds, which he could accept without any compunction. Come! come! disbursement is not so easy a matter."—"Well," rejoined Gohier, "all I say is, that his resignation should have been accepted when it was offered. Rewbel was the only man who had the heart to say, as he presented him with the pen, 'You desire, general, to retire from service? The Republic will undoubtedly lose in you a brave and able chief; but she still has children who will not forsake her.'" The result of this bombast was, that Bonaparte did not take the pen, that he withdrew the tender of his resignation, and that he departed for Egypt, carrying with him the flower of our troops, of our savans, and all our navy. "We should have smote him," continued the ex-president of the Directory, still fretful from his misfortune—"we should have smote him, and that without pity; the Republic would then still have been in existence. Such was my advice; but Sieyes, who was his accomplice, had influence enough in our council to get Bernadotte's resignation accepted, although in fact he had not tendered it, in order to have him sent out of the way, while he uttered not one word of accepting the resignation of a factious wretch who braved the first power in the Republic by insolently offering his own. I repeat it," added he, with energy, "that if my advice had been taken everything would have been easily settled."

The above conversation, which I have detailed with the utmost exactness, affords some idea of the danger of which Bonaparte was apprized when he insisted on his departure for Egypt. Not only had the East always been the favourite object of his wishes, but, at the very moment when glory had almost immortalised him in his astonishing successes in Italy, he could not bear the thought of remaining in Europe, where every echo told his splendid achievements. Besides, to a vivid desire of raising the ancient war-cry of the crusaders there was joined a positive intention to escape positive danger. I shall by and by relate some facts which preceded and followed his departure from Paris, by which the truth of my assertions

may be judged,—facts with which I became acquainted after my marriage through the medium of Junot and his friends.

Some time after the conversation I have detailed above, Gohier met Moreau and M. Garet. The general was embarrassed at the rencontre, and was endeavouring to make a justification of his conduct. "General," said Gohier, addressing him with dignity, "I am by my profession enabled to read people's consciences; do not force me to say that I read in yours nothing which can excuse you."

Moreau began to raise his voice, as if he were hurt by the severe expressions of Gohier. "General," he again said, "I have no wish to seek you, nor certainly any to interrogate you. I do not wish to continue a conversation which must be as painful to you as it is disagreeable to me. I shall only add," said he, laying his hand gently on the pommel of Moreau's sword, "that a bunch of keys would well become this place." Moreau turned as pale as ashes. The blow was struck; he stammered out some words which Gohier, as he left him, affected not to hear. It is pretended that Moreau deplored his error, and thought to make amends by exclaiming, "I shall find a way to repair it!" If he thought to do so by pointing the Russian cannon against the French columns, he has at least proved that he never fairly knew what he was about.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Epochs in the life of the Emperor—Revolution of the 8th November—Errors corrected—Bonaparte falsely accused of fear—Incredible sagacity of General Bonaparte—Colonel Dumoulin and General Brune—Lucien in danger, and his deliverance—Hopes created by the Chief of the Consular Government—Bonaparte's friendship for Madame Lucien—Residences of the members of the Bonaparte family—Lucien Minister of the Interior—Visit to Lucien at le Plessis Chamant—The poet d'Offreville—Lucien's cousin Ramolino—Assassination of the family of Du Petitval at Vitry—Scene at Malmaison, and long conversation of the First Consul.

THE life of Napoleon may be divided into several periods. The first, like all that is young, was great, powerful, and brilliant. It was then and in Italy that his name rose above the reach of detraction, to shine with a splendour which threw into shade the later glories of the Emperor. Egypt saw the commencement of the second epoch of his life full of wonders. The 8th of November was the third. And two only form the remainder of an existence so rapid and so full. Thus to mark the passage of Napoleon upon earth, five trophies may be said, as landmarks, to divide his route. The first formed of a pile of conquered banners, mural crowns, treaties, keys of towns, and more laurels than ever before Victory had granted to her most favoured heroes. The second composed of pyramids, sphinxes, and hieroglyphic monuments, indicating that his youthful glory had been to awaken the echoes of the ancient African shores. The Consular fasces marked the third; this emblem, still surmounted by the republican cock, admitted no suspicion that the next column would be formed of sceptres, thrones, and crowns; bearing an

escutcheon of imperial blazonry. And what is that which follows? It is a tomb! a tomb which has ingulfed all! which has devoured laurels, thrones, sceptres, and crowns! and which, fixed by indifference and hatred in a desert, is visited only by that vassal of England, the ocean, whose incessantly returning waves would fain conceal even the slab that covers his remains.

But a truce to these reflections; when indulged, they deprive the mind of the free exercise of its powers. I return to earlier and less painful recollections.

The Revolution of the 8th of November is undoubtedly the most important of the nine which we have experienced in the course of seven years;[1] it not only changed the destiny of France, but exercised a powerful influence upon that of Europe and the world. Nevertheless, none of the events which had preceded it had passed with so much apparent calm. France was so tired of the Directory that anything which should replace it would have been well received, and was happy in obeying an authority that offered some guarantee; the past answered for the future which General Bonaparte announced. He only was seen in this consular triumvirate; Sieyes and Roger-Ducos stood unobserved in the shade; and the young general served as the only point of view to eyes fatigued with weeping, which had so long sought, without being aware of it, a lighthouse that should guide them into port. Thirty days only had elapsed since Bonaparte had landed at Frejus, and already he had overthrown the shameful government by which France was weighed down! and had given it a new one, of which the wheels commenced their movement from the first day. He had calmed all inquietudes, dissipated all alarms, and revived all hopes.

I shall speak of the events of the 8th of November

[1] First, the 31st of May, the fall of the Girondins. 2. The 5th of April, the fall of the priestly party. 3. The 27th of July. 4. The 2d of April, the defeat of Barrère, Collot d'Herbois, and Billaud-Varennes. 5. The 20th of May, execution of Romme, Soubrani, etc., and defeat of the Jacobins. 6. The 5th of October, the Directorial Government. 7. The 5th of September, the second Emigration. 8. The 19th of June, fight of the Directors among themselves; Sieyes and Barras conquer Merlin of Douai, Treilhard, etc. 9. The days of November, and the establishment of the Consular Government.

only inasmuch as they have appeared to me under a different aspect from that which all the accounts of this day have represented. There were even at the time, and in Paris itself, versions which did not agree; and it may be easily conceived; for then, as now and always, party spirit blending itself with such relations, its poison must necessarily infuse itself into them. What effects have I seen result from it! Falsehood was one of the slightest, which, however, is sufficiently serious when it affects the materials that will hereafter serve for the compilation of history.

There is one fact in particular, of which the report was first spread by malevolence, which the friends of Bonaparte have disdained to combat, and which has been finally adopted by credulity and folly — it is the alarm with which Bonaparte is alleged to have been seized on entering the hall of the Five Hundred at Saint Cloud on the 9th of November. This absurd version would fall to the ground of itself if it were not found in some works which offer, in appearance, a guarantee for the faith they demand. In one of these works the author goes so far as to assert that it was he who recalled General Bonaparte to himself, by observing to him that he was speaking without knowing what he said. I take the liberty of remarking to him in my turn that he never dared suffer such words to reach the ears of General Bonaparte. I say this, because to permit such a statement to remain uncontradicted is to give a totally erroneous impression of the character of Bonaparte.

First, then, it is false that he spoke on the 9th of November to the Council of Five Hundred in the form of a discourse. It was on the preceding evening, to the Ancients, that he used these remarkable words: "Let us not seek in the past examples that may retard our progress. Nothing in history resembles the close of the eighteenth century; nothing in the close of the eighteenth century resembles the present moment! We demand a Republic founded upon true liberty. We will have it — I swear it!"

This discourse, much longer than the few words I have quoted, bears no resemblance to a crowd of incoherent phrases, as *he who recalled General Bonaparte to himself* would represent it. This oration, pronounced in the Council of Ancients the 18th of Brumaire, preceded the review which took place in the Tuileries, and the remarkable allocution which General Bonaparte addressed to Bottot, the envoy of the Directory—"What have you done with this France which I left you so glorious? I left you peace—I return and find war. I left you victories—I find reverses. I left you the millions of Italy—I find despoiling laws and misery throughout!" Truly there was vigour enough in these words to remove all idea of pusillanimity. Nevertheless, on the 8th of November he was in the midst of Paris. The Revolution was far from being consummated, and he was in real danger.

With respect to the emotion observed in General Bonaparte in the hall of the Five Hundred at Saint Cloud, the following is its true explication. It is no presumption, but the actual fact. On the general's entering the orangery, he no sooner appeared than violent outcries were raised against him, "Down with the Cromwell!" "No Dictator!" "Outlaw him!" General Bonaparte knew very well that the Council of Five Hundred was composed of ultra-republicans, and of enthusiastic partisans of the constitution of the year III.; but he had depended too much upon the success of Lucien's exertions, who had laboured all night to strengthen his brother's party. It is a fact that this reception, without alarming him to the extent of enchaining his faculties, not only induced surprise, but that surprise for the moment deprived him of the words he would have opposed to these vociferations. He reflected how he should act, and his resolution was speedily taken. It was necessary to decide the question instantly, which could not have been done had the Five Hundred entered upon discussion. He might even have been assassinated; and if he had run the risk, it would not have been a display of valour, but of folly. With an eagle's glance he saw through the circumstances

which surrounded him. This self-consultation lasted perhaps some minutes, and the untalented, judging by themselves, attributed this silence and inaction to fear. But he was not surrounded by those only who were thus incapable of appreciating his sentiments. I also have collected the opinions of eye-witnesses, who, capable of judging calmly, and possessing perhaps as much merit as he whom they looked on, have read his great mind without doing it injustice.

It is difficult to believe all the things reported to be said and done in the very short space of time which General Bonaparte passed in the hall of the Council of Five Hundred; it was but an apparition. And, with the same frankness with which I have defended him from the imputation of cowardice, I will add that I do not believe that a poniard was raised against him; it was Lucien who, after his brother's departure, was in real danger.

I know that much has been said of this attempted assassination; perhaps General Bonaparte believed it himself; at least it is true that when he was in the court of the palace he told it to the soldiers; but, I repeat, I do not believe it. It is not, however, any doubt of the hatred of Péné Arena against Bonaparte which makes me question the fact; but simply the manner in which the events are said to have taken place. One peculiarity is sufficiently remarkable, that this same day Bonaparte, in addressing the troops, never stood still, and that he moved only in a zigzag direction. For why? Was he afraid of a pistol-shot from the windows? This conjecture may be correct.

My brother-in-law was on the palace steps when Bonaparte came down. His friendship for Lucien made him extremely anxious for the fate of the young Tribune. He saw his brother making his harangue and his tortuous promenade, without taking any step to provide assistance for the president of the council, who meanwhile might be murdered in his curule chair. He approached Bonaparte and mentioned Lucien; the general immediately turned towards an officer who was a few paces distant from him.

"Colonel Dumoulin," said he, "take a battalion of grenadiers and hasten to my brother's deliverance."

The choice which General Bonaparte made of this officer shows the tact with which he could seize the smallest circumstances that could be turned to his advantage. Colonel Dumoulin was the first aide-de-camp of General Brune, commander-in-chief of a triumphant army in Holland. Already Moreau had given his public pledge in acting as guard to the directors. The first aide-de-camp of Brune, commanding the battalion which dispersed the opposing council, would cause the impression that Brune himself was in concert with Bonaparte. This assurance was with many people a more than sufficient counterpoise to the fear which the retirement of Jourdan and Bernadotte, both known as warm republicans, had inspired. I am sure that Bonaparte had at first no fixed idea upon this subject; but, with that lively and rapid conception which embraced all things with a single glance, he no sooner perceived Colonel Dumoulin than his name started from his lips.

At length we possessed a Government which promised some sort of security for the future. My mother, whose heart always saw the fair side of everything that was done by a Bonaparte, at first considered this action of Napoleon only as that of a young enthusiast desirous of liberating his country from the evils by which it was desolated. Never thinking seriously upon politics, she knew the Revolution only by its horrors and its noise. That of the 8th of November, therefore, which was accomplished without firing a gun, she could not understand to be a revolution; though, perhaps, there never had been one more important for us and for Europe. It was the ninth change in seven years, not of the government, but of the pilot at the helm. Lucien was almost immediately called to the ministry of the interior. He had desired another office; but at this period he encountered in Fouché an enemy who was determined upon his destruction, and who never ceased his intrigues till his object was consummated. The confidence which Napoleon, without any attachment to him, placed in this man, was always an

enigma to me. He had sense and talent, no doubt; but did this advantage neutralise the importance of the danger with which he surrounded Napoleon? *No.* And again, the same *no* is applicable to another genius far superior to Fouché, who, sharing with him the confidence of Bonaparte, equally contributed to his destruction.[1]

Madame Lucien was not satisfied with her husband's change of fortune; all this grand display alarmed her. She was obliged now to give up her time to duties which, with reason, she thought far less important than those she had hitherto fulfilled with so much pleasure. She frequently came in a morning to enumerate her troubles to my mother, and to take her advice upon the new and difficult position in which she was placed. But a circumstance which she was far from foreseeing gave her comfort and happiness; it was the change in her favour which took place in the sentiments of her brother-in-law. The penetration of the First Consul was too just for the excellent qualities which animated Madame Lucien's heart to escape him; and he soon attached himself to her with a truly fraternal regard.

I must not omit to mention a visit which, a short time before these great events, we made to Lucien's villa of le Plessis Chamant. All Napoleon's family at that time possessed fine country houses, in which they took pleasure to receive society. Joseph had Morfontaine;[2] Lucien, le Plessis Chamant; Madame Leclerc, Montgobert. At Morfontaine, excursions upon the lakes, public readings, billiards, literature, ghost stories more or less mysterious, a perfect ease and liberty, gave charms to the passing hour. To this must be added that which

[1] In the tedious hours of his confinement at St. Helena, the victim prisoner must have considered with repentance his continual obstinacy in refusing attention to the numerous notices given him respecting one of these two personages. I shall relate a conversation I had on this subject with the Emperor in 1806.

[2] I have read, I know not where, that Madame Bonaparte had deposited with Joseph 40,000 francs to purchase for her this beautiful estate, and that he kept Morfontaine for himself. This is not true. Madame B. had bought Malmaison some time previously; and, besides, none but a silly mind could suppose that Morfontaine could be purchased for so trifling a sum.

filled the measure of enjoyment, the most friendly, invariably friendly reception, which was always accorded by the master and mistress of the mansion. They did not admit every one, but when once any person was established as a member of their society, they were sure of experiencing the most courteous hospitality from Joseph Bonaparte and his lady.

Madame Lucien was very amiable ; but her husband's temper was not always the same. That did not lessen the amusement to be found at le Plessis ; perhaps it in some measure contributed to it. I do not remember in my whole life, even in its most joyous seasons, to have laughed so heartily as during the five or six weeks I spent amongst a numerous party of guests at that villa. M. d'Offreville, from fifty-five to sixty years of age, a man of *great talents*, and of some *pretension* to extreme foppery, was the butt of our mirth and the grand subject of our entertainment. He was a poet, and highly satisfied with his compositions ; which, together with the dignity he derived from having held, before the Revolution, the office of cloak-bearer to Monsieur, was the continual theme of his conversation. "It is true," he would sometimes remark, "I have been peculiarly fortunate in my poems : Voltaire, Racine, even Corneille, have some feeble passages ; my poetry has none." Still, notwithstanding all this absurdity, and a figure, countenance, and costume by no means calculated to inspire the respect due to his years, he might have passed well enough in a crowd, if he had had more sense than to expose himself and his follies to the observation and ridicule of a young, gay, and satirical society.

Le Plessis Chamant is in a dull situation ; the environs present nothing picturesque, and no shade is to be had nearer than the Forest of Senlis, at some distance even from the gates of the Park. What induced Lucien to fix upon this property, when villas of pleasure of the most inviting description were to be purchased in abundance, within a dozen leagues on all sides of Paris, I never could comprehend.

The subject of villas and country seats reminds me of a terrible catastrophe, in the sequel of which I had an opportunity of remarking upon the First Consul's demeanour in an affair of interest. In the night between the 20th and 21st of April, of the year IV., the Chateau de Vitry, at that time the property of M. du Petitval, was entered by a troop of assassins, who murdered M. du Petitval, his mother-in-law, his sister-in-law, and three servants; the nurse escaped with an infant son in her arms, passing through the hall filled with men in the dress of the police, and having drawn swords in their hands. Nothing was stolen; plate, diamonds, watches, and other valuables, all remained in their places; the papers only were missing. The relations of the victims immediately made an effort to obtain justice on the perpetrators of this inhuman crime; the preliminary steps were taken by the local authorities, the procès-verbeaux were drawn up; but suddenly these symptoms of activity relaxed, and before long the whole transaction remained involved in impenetrable mystery.

Three years after this horrible event, M. Dubois was appointed Prefect of the Police of Paris. Vitry was within his district, and he immediately showed an active interest in the affair. He demanded from the local magistrate all the documents in his possession. The judge who had taken the deposition was deceased; search was made among the rolls of his office, but in vain; no trace of the examinations could be found. It was concluded that all the documents must have been removed to the archives of the criminal tribunal; but the most minute investigation ended only in the conviction that not the smallest particle of evidence relating to this atrocious murder had been preserved. Some terrible reflections arose out of the total absence of these documents, which certainly had at one time existed!

But the relations of the deceased continued to demand justice. I was one day in the apartment of Madame Bonaparte when the First Consul was present; she was persuading him to admit a person who was in waiting, and to whom she had promised the favour of an introduction.

"I have already said," replied the First Consul, "that I would not give audience upon this affair; accusations without proof, however strong the presumption may be, have no other effect than to increase scandal. However," he added, after walking to and fro some time without speaking, "let your protégé come in; I will retire and re-enter as if by accident." I made a movement to withdraw, but was desired to remain; and M. de Bois-Préau was admitted, coming, as I learned from Madame Bonaparte, to solicit the First Consul's interference to obtain justice against the murderers of his relation, Du Petitval. Madame Bonaparte approached him with an expression of lively interest; the First Consul almost immediately returned, and his lady introduced the stranger, who presented him with a Memoir of several pages in length of close writing. The First Consul took it, glanced rapidly through it, but evidently gave it much attention. After some time he thus addressed M. de Bois-Préau:—

"This, Monsieur, is a delicate affair; the horror of it increases its difficulty. Your accusations are founded only upon moral proofs; these are not sufficient before a legal tribunal; before the tribunal of opinion the case would be different. The wealth of those you accuse will not clear them before either, but it may be supposed that their position in society has afforded them the means of security." The First Consul, as he spoke, continued, according to custom, to walk about the room with his hands behind his back. What M. de Bois-Préau said to him I did not hear, but he replied, "I know it, I know it; but the proofs, the proofs are indispensable."—"Proof is no doubt necessary," said the petitioner; "nevertheless, general, I think, and all the friends and relations of the unfortunate victims think also, that if you, as the Chief of the State, would take vengeance into your hands, it would be secure."

The First Consul smiled. "You give me credit," said he, "for more power than I possess, and for even more than I should choose to possess; a power which, if it were accorded me, I should certainly not make use of.

Justice is open to you, why do you not invoke it? for myself, I regret that it is not within my province to assist you." He then saluted M. de Bois-Préau, who, understanding that his visit must not be prolonged, retired with an air of melancholy which the First Consul probably remarked; for he said to him, when he had already reached the door, "I am truly sorry, I repeat to you, that I cannot oblige you in this case; particularly" —— but here he stopped short, and taking from the mantelpiece the Memoir M. de Bois-Préau had presented to him, held it out to its owner. "I entreat you to keep it, general," said the latter. The First Consul slightly knit his brows, and still extending his hand, made a movement indicative of impatience. "It is not a petition which I have had the honour to commit to you," continued M. de Bois-Préau; "it is but a narrative of this melancholy event, and only something more circumstantial than that given by the journals of the time." The First Consul hesitated an instant; then replaced the manuscript on the mantelpiece, saying, with a gracious smile of dismissal, "I accept it, then, as a narrative."

When the petitioner had departed the First Consul resumed the Memoir, and read it again with great attention. He walked as he read, and words escaped him at intervals which showed the profound indignation it inspired. "It is infamous!" he at length exclaimed. "Our children will believe that Frenchmen have been slaughtered by Frenchmen within a league of Paris, and that the crime has not been instantly revenged by the laws."

Then, after again perusing the Memoir, still walking rapidly, he added, "It is incredible; a police inert, if not guilty. Dubois would not have acted thus. Let citizen Cambacérès be informed that I wish to speak to him," continued he, turning to Duroc, and left the room, shutting the door with great violence. When he was gone, Madame Bonaparte told us that the First Consul had long formed an opinion upon this subject; murders were at that time frequent, but the circumstances of this were peculiarly striking.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The winter of 1800—The restoration of order and general security—Masséna, and the siege of Genoa—Moreau's triumphs on the Rhine—The campaign of Marengo—Passage of Mount St. Bernard—Marmont's artillery—Inconceivable effect produced at Paris by the news of the victory—Bonfires—Universal joy—News from the army—Particulars of the battle of Marengo—The death of Desaix—Kellerman's admirable charge—Folly of General Melas—Habits of Napoleon in conversing with strangers—De Bubna—Services of the Kellermans, father and son—Landing of Junot at Marseilles—Grief of the aides-de-camp of Desaix.

THE winter of 1800 was very brilliant in comparison to those which had preceded it. Confidence was restored; every one felt the same sentiments towards General Bonaparte, and at this epoch they were those of attachment. How fine a destiny has he destroyed! What opportunities has he lost! How much was he beloved at that period! Yes, beloved, generally beloved; and where affection did not exist, admiration and confidence did. The emigrants returned in great numbers, and had every reason to be satisfied with the reception they met with; if they had vexations to endure from Fouché, on application to the First Consul they were sure to obtain justice. What I am now saying is the truth. I feel that many persons, on reading these Memoirs, will throw my volumes aside with ill-humour; but no other object guides my pen than that of making Napoleon known as I have seen and judged him. I think myself entitled to do so, because I do not believe that any mirror is capable of reflecting him, in all periods of his life, so clearly as my memory can do. I shall not always find colours sufficiently pure and brilliant to paint him with, but then, as now, I shall say

what I have felt, and describe him as I have known him. To many Napoleon may have appeared a mere character of illusion, to me he was all reality. The epochs of his glories and those of his faults are entire in my remembrance; the golden vapour which envelops the first, and the veil which covers the last, are not impervious to my eye.

The First Consul knew too well that the success of Masséna, in the brilliant affair of Zurich, though it had retarded, had by no means overcome the danger with which we were threatened. Austria, irritated by so many reverses when she had reckoned upon victories, had determined upon a final effort for our destruction, and France was again threatened. General Masséna, after having resisted a combined Russian and Austrian force of threefold his numbers, had retired upon Genoa, where he was soon shut up with 15,000 men and a population of 100,000 souls; he sustained a siege of fifty-two days, which should conduce more to his renown than all his victories. The brave Suchet, separated from his general-in-chief, effected a retreat upon Nice, and, in concert with Soult and Compan, exhibited prodigies of valour and talent. But almost all the passages of Italy were open, and the Austrians, with General Melas at their head, prepared to make us lament the glory of Zurich; General Otto continued the blockade of Genoa, rejoiced to detain in captivity the conqueror of the Austro-Russian army.

The First Consul then took one of those resolutions to which genius only is competent. The passage of St. Bernard was accomplished. Suwaroff had the preceding year declined this enterprise. Napoleon saw its almost impossibility, but saw it only to conquer. The index of his powerful hand extended to its glassy summits, and the obstacles disappeared. Everything became possible to the exertions of those men whose talents his penetration had discovered. General Marmont, commander of the artillery, found means to transport the cannon across the most frightful precipices; he caused the trunks of large

trees to be hollowed into the form of troughs, and placing the cannons and howitzers in them, was thus enabled to have them drawn to the most elevated summit of the pass. The journals have commented largely on this famous passage of St. Bernard; poetry has celebrated, and the arts have delineated it; but nothing can, at this distance of time, convey an idea of the enthusiasm it communicated to the parties interested in the operation: the letters written from Milan, Suza, Verceil, and la Brunette, by those who, having traversed the Alps, were reconquering Italy, painted in glowing colours the brilliancy of this undertaking. We had many friends in that heroic army which was executing the grandest plan the head of man ever conceived, and it was nearly accomplished by the successful passage of St. Bernard. The advantages to be derived from it were evident to every one throughout France; mothers, sisters, wives, and friends received news from the army with an energy of enthusiasm not to be described, and never to be forgotten. When my thoughts revert to this epoch, they recall sensations which have never been equalled, or but once, and on what occasion I shall hereafter describe. But in the spring of 1800, perhaps my sixteenth year enhanced the brilliant colouring of that picture which I contemplated with charmed eyes. It is possible, and I am willing to believe it. Why deny these illusions? They pass away but too speedily.

While the French penetrated into Italy by three passes, which the folly of General Melas had left unguarded, General Moreau, who *then* loved his country, was acquiring celebrity on the banks of the Rhine. The passage of this river, the taking of Fribourg and Memmingen, the battles of Eugen, Bibernach, and Moeskirch, and a multitude of partial engagements, in which the Austrians lost more than 25,000 in killed and wounded, without calculating the prisoners,—all these were the results of a campaign of thirty-three days! Ah! if Moreau had always acted thus, how proud would his country have been of his name.[1]

[1] The campaign of the Rhine, which began the 26th of April 1800, is

During the campaign of Marengo Paris became almost a solitude; from Paris to Turin the road was covered with travellers, who, urged by motives of interest—some personal, some general, went to meet the news they were too impatient to await. But this period of expectation was of short continuance. The First Consul crossed Saint Bernard on the 20th of May. On the 21st of June intelligence of the battle of Marengo reached Paris. The effect of this important victory was to raise the funds from twenty-nine to thirty-five francs; six months previous they were only at eleven. On that day we had breakfasted and dined at Saint Mandé. The house being solitary, and no one but ourselves arriving in the village from Paris; when we returned to town in the evening we received the news amidst all that delirium of joy which inebriated the people of the Faubourgs, always so vehement in the expression of their sentiments. Two hundred bonfires were blazing at once in the quarter we had to pass through, and the populace dancing round them were crying, *Vive la République! Vive le Premier Consul! Vive l'Armée!* embracing and congratulating each other as upon a personal and family festivity. A circuitous route home gave us an opportunity of enjoying a truly fine spectacle, that of a great people affectionate and grateful.

"Have you seen," said one to another, "how he writes to the other consuls? That is our man! '*I hope the people of France will be satisfied with its army.*'"—"Yes, yes," was exclaimed from all sides. "The people are satisfied;" and shouts of *Vive la République! Vive Bonaparte!* were redoubled. My brother and I shared the joyful enthusiasm; my mother was more calm. "We shall see hereafter," said she; "Moreau has done great things, of which nothing is said." The coolness which subsisted between my mother and General Bonaparte rendered her unjust to him; Albert and I told her so

one of the most glorious military movements of Moreau. Between that day and the 29th of May the Austrians were not only driven across the Rhine but were obliged to retire beyond Augsbourg.

jestingly. "It is impossible," said she; but repeated, "We shall see."

Sometime afterwards, when the officers of all ranks were returning to Paris, and different accounts of the battle began to circulate, the conduct of General Kellerman excited universal admiration, and the silence of the First Consul upon it caused equal astonishment. I may affirm that all those who returned from the army in Italy at that time related the event in similar terms.

The action of General Kellerman is, then, one of the finest of our military triumphs. I do not propose to settle the question of the gain or loss of this battle; it is one of those great difficulties which I have heard gravely discussed by men who could never emerge from their habitual mediocrity, and upon which I have heard the greatest military characters of the age deliver their opinions; while my female ears, open with all humility to the dictation of such men, for example, as Masséna, have enabled me to found my own judgment upon theirs. At about five o'clock Desaix fell, struck to the heart by a ball as he led a division of 4000 men against an army of 20,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, and whose numerical strength was doubled by the pride of victory. The French, rendered desperate by the loss of a general they adored, endeavoured in vain to revenge his death; all fell into disorder. The 9th light infantry wavered, then gave way, and at length in its precipitate retreat drew the line with it, and all appeared lost. It was then that, by one of those inspirations upon which the destiny of armies and empires sometimes depends, General Kellerman made, with 500 horse, that admirable charge which decided the fate of the day. Masked by mulberry trees, from the branches of which the vines they supported hung down in clustering garlands, and which veiled his movements from the enemy, General Kellerman observed the events of the battle, ready to give his assistance wherever it would be most effectual.

Upon the retreat of our troops the Austrian column

suffered itself to be hurried on by the ardour of pursuit. It passed General Kellerman with an inconsiderate rapidity, and presented a defenceless flank; of this fault he profited with that promptitude of apprehension which distinguishes the skilful warrior. He fell upon the Austrians like a thunderbolt amidst their victorious disorder, and, finding them unprotected by their firearms, made in an instant more than 6000 prisoners, among whom was General Zach, chief of the staff, and the soul of the Austrian army.

General Melas, who, in perfect security of victory, had already resumed his route to Alexandria, imagined himself the victim of a terrific enchantment when he found himself surrounded on all sides; for the French army was to pass the Bormida at the break of day, and he knew that the brave Suchet was on his rear, his advanced guard having already passed the mountains. When, therefore, on the morning of the 15th, General Gardane presented himself at one of the têtes-de-pont of the Bormida, a parley was proposed, and General Melas capitulated. The character of this general, at all times either perfectly credulous or wholly incredulous, made a strange exhibition throughout the campaign! Is it not curious to find Melas and his council deciding, on the 13th of June, the very eve of the battle of Marengo, "that the existence of the army of reserve was completely unknown to them; and that, as the instructions of the Aulic Council mentioned only Masséna's army, the difficult position in which they were placed was entirely the fault of the ministry, and not at all to be attributed to the general?"

The author of the *Mémorial du Dépôt de la Guerre* is right in the opinion that the Emperor acquired much curious information respecting his campaigns against the Austrians from his conversations with general officers and statesmen, Austrian, Bavarian, and Saxon. I have seen him conversing for two hours together with the most distinguished men in Germany, both in the military and diplomatic professions; and when he had ended, and the interlocutor was departed, he has exclaimed, rubbing his

hands, "There is information for twenty pages of my commentary."

Once, either at Compiègne or at Fontainebleau, having just closed a long interview with a person to whom he was not sparing of his questions, and who replied to him with such clearness and precision, and at the same time with such rapidity, that the Emperor was surprised, he stopped, and fixed his eyes upon him with so striking an expression of countenance that he had no occasion to speak his thoughts. The interlocutor was not intimidated, and his physiognomy, always calm, but not inanimate, betrayed not the slightest emotion. When he was gone, the Emperor remarked to Junot, "That is one of the most subtle men I know, and yet I believe him to be honest. Just now he answered all my questions with such extraordinary frankness that for a moment I believed he was making game of me;" and the Emperor's features as he walked about the room wore that musing smile which gave such a charm to his countenance. "But no!" he continued, "he is right; the best diplomacy is to go straight to the object. And then he is a brave man. Be particular in your attentions to him in your quality of Governor of Paris; do you understand me?" This man was M. de Bubna.

I now return to the singular explanation of General Melas; is it not really comic? But after all, whether the conquerors were conquered by their own faults or those of others, the grand affair was to take skilful advantage of their error, and this General Kellerman did. But why was he refused in his own country a due share in the glory of the day? Even admitting that the First Consul had ordered this famous charge, he could only have done so vaguely, and the result of its splendid execution, which decided the fate of Italy and France, deserved some better recompense than the cold words of approbation, "You have made a pretty good charge."

It has been said that the Emperor, in making the father of General Kellerman a marshal, senator, and Duc de Valmy, and in giving great commands to the son,

had discharged his debt of gratitude. Now I think, first, that an affectionate word is of as much value in such cases as a more solid recompense. Then, Marshal Kellerman was creditor to the State for the battle of Valmy, and this debt had nothing in common with that of this son, whose military and political reputation rested on other services besides the battle of Marengo. I believe, then, that the Emperor would have done him no more than justice in appointing him inspector or colonel-general, and in giving him during his father's lifetime the title of Duke of Marengo. He had well named Lannes, Duke of Montebello. Lannes, in gaining that battle, prepared the triumph of Marengo; General Kellerman decided it.

The day of the battle of Marengo, Junot, who had been taken prisoner by the English on quitting Egypt, landed at Marseilles, and reached his native land once more after several months' captivity. A thousand times he has repeated to me how greatly the joy of his return would have been damped had he been conscious that the fields of Italy were again the scenes of contest, and that he could not fight at his general's side. Alas! the same day, and almost at the same hour, while Desaix fell before the murderous cannon of Austria on the field of Marengo, the poniard which treason had committed to the hand of a fanatic, terminated the existence of Kléber![1] The pride of our armies; they both perished on the same day, and nearly at the same hour.

That I may have no further occasion to revert to this battle, I will now state that my opinion upon the facts here related has been inculcated by men who were witnesses of the struggle, or were thoroughly masters of its operation by report. Frequently, during this year of the battle of Marengo, which was also that of my marriage, have I seen a dinner-party prolonged until nine o'clock, because Bessières, Lannes, Eugène, Duroc, or Berthier, or some others of his companions in arms, or all together, explained to Junot, who was greedy of the most trifling

[1] Kléber was assassinated at Cairo by a Turk, sent for that purpose by the Vizier, soon after the defeat of the latter at Heliopolis.

details, all those of this memorable affair. The table then became the plain of Marengo; a group of decanters at the head stood for the village, the candelabras at the bottom figured as the towns of Tortona and Alexandria, and the pears, the filberts, and bunches of grapes represented, as well as they could, the Austrian and Hungarian regiments and our brave troops. A woman certainly can have no pretensions to understand the military science; but it is a fact, that when in 1818 I passed through Alexandria on my road to France I remained a long time at Marengo, examined its environs, and visited every tree; from having so frequently heard all the particulars of this famous battle described, I soon found myself on a spot replete with recollections which every surrounding object seemed to awaken in my mind. I brought away two views of the village of Marengo; one which I took from the plain, and another from a point where the mistress of the little inn had placed me to enable me to introduce into my sketch a tree under which they at first laid the unfortunate Desaix, believing that he still breathed.

Desaix, it is well known, had several aides-de-camp. Amongst the number were two who made themselves remarkable by the excess of their grief. One of them, in a voice broken by sobs, exclaimed, "Ah! my general! why have I survived you? and the army—and France! What a loss have both suffered!" And the good young man shed tears of sincerity over the corpse of him whom he regretted as warmly as the young —— regretted Turenne. The other aide-de-camp was also young, and he wept as earnestly, but his grief displayed itself in a different manner. "Ah, my God! my general is dead! What will become of me? My God! what will become of me?" I have heard the First Consul imitate the accents of these young officers; one of them still wept for his general many years after his death. It was Rapp, a worthy and honest creature, a good comrade, and in all respects a man much above the degree in which he had fixed himself by the abruptness and apparent roughness of his manners.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Fêtes in Paris and a ball at Lucien Bonaparte's—The gallery of the Duc de Brissac—Madame Bonaparte and Madame Lucien—First attempt at royal assumptions—Moreau's victories on the Danube—Masséna's judgment on the battle of Hochstedt—Secret treaty between Austria and England—France resumes her place amongst the powers of Europe—Affecting death of Madame Lucien—Last visit to her—Sepulchral monument at le Plessis Chamant.

THE winter of 1800, I have observed, had been very brilliant. Lucien Bonaparte, who then occupied, as minister of the interior, the Hotel de Brissac, gave there some splendid fêtes in the gallery which the Duc de Brissac had added solely for this purpose. It is a fine gallery, though rather too narrow for its length, but upon the whole it perfectly answers its object, and is altogether the hall of festivity.

My mother occasionally took me to these balls; at one of them I remember Madame Bonaparte [1] took her seat at the upper end of the gallery, assuming already the attitude of sovereignty. The ladies all rose at her entrance and when she retired. The good and simple Christine followed her with a gentle smile upon her lips; and the remark was frequently made that if the one was the wife of the First Consul, the Chief Magistrate of the Republic, the other was the wife of his brother, and that Madame Bonaparte might, without derogation of dignity, have accorded the courtesies of society and family intercourse,

[1] Be it understood, once for all, that in future whenever I use the term Madame Bonaparte I speak of the wife of the First Consul. For Madame Bonaparte *the mother*, I shall always employ the latter title or her Christian name.

by giving her arm to Madame Lucien, instead of requiring her to follow or precede her. But Christine *was* Madame Lucien, a name which awoke no good feeling in the mind of Madame Bonaparte, for between her and Lucien a mortal war subsisted.

Apparently, however, she was very friendly both with Lucien and his wife, and it was with an exterior of perfect complaisance that she thus obliged them to follow her. But the amusing part of the business was that Lucien was wholly unconscious of these airs of superiority. The mild Christine often wept in private over the mortification to which she was thus subjected; but she was careful to avoid irritating her husband, who would without a doubt have repaired instantly to the Tuileries, and have there enacted a *scena* before Madame Bonaparte, in which the First Consul would probably have supported him, for he had sincerely attached himself to Madame Lucien since he had learnt to appreciate her excellent qualities.

This recurrence to the winter of 1800 has made me lose sight of the glorious epoch of Marengo, to which I must now return; and for the present, during a long course of years we shall but march from victory to victory. We shall pay dearly for these days of gratification; but at this price we may be content to suffer. While the First Consul was conqueror at Marengo, Moreau beat the Austrians on the left bank of the Danube; and on the same field of battle which witnessed the glory of Villars, the disgrace of Tallard and Marsin was effaced by that of General Kray. My French heart owes gratitude to General Moreau for this action. I have often heard Junot and Masséna speak of this battle of Hochstedt. They said that the manœuvres by which Moreau obliged Kray to quit his camp at Ulm were models in the art of war.

News was soon after received of a fresh proof of the hatred which England will never cease to bear towards us. On the 20th of June a treaty of subsidy was signed at Vienna between Austria and England. It specified that neither of the two Powers should make a separate

peace. England was to lend by it to Austria the sum of two millions sterling (forty-eight millions of francs), and this treaty was signed, these engagements were taken, when Austria was beaten by us on all sides. This kind of perseverance, even in misfortune, has something great in it. However, an armistice was concluded at Munich, on the 15th of July, between Austria and France, to suspend the operations in Germany, as that of Marengo had done in Italy.

While France thus arose once more great and powerful amongst the nations, the interior assumed a new life, and quite another aspect. Confidence in the First Consul was the pervading sentiment of all classes. Commerce looked up with hope; the clergy obtained a glimpse of the day when they would be protected; while the nobility and superior financiers, being Frenchmen, were bound to love glory, and by attaching themselves to him were likely to obtain it in abundance.

Towards this epoch we experienced a heavy affliction in the death of Madame Lucien. I was affected by it as if she had been connected with us by closer ties than those of friendship. There were not, it is true, between us all the points of contact which constitute an intimate connection; but our friendship had strengthened materially since her residence in Paris; our intercourse, if not familiar, was constant; and her matured imagination, the justness of her reasoning, her love for her husband, which taught her to make his gratification her chief object, were all circumstances which daily endeared her to us. My mother, who was tenderly attached to her, bitterly lamented her loss.

She was in the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy. It was said, that being menaced with a miscarriage she had not been properly treated, and the event spoke for itself. In a few weeks the amiable Christine was no more.

We went to see her the day before her death. No visits, it may easily be believed, were permitted; but our intimacy gave us almost the rights of relationship. We found her in a small room adjoining her bedroom. Her

apartment had been changed to admit more air, for she was suffocating; and to facilitate her respiration she was lying on a camp bed with two mattresses. This change afforded her some relief, she told us, adding, with a sweet and melancholy smile, but without any accent of complaint, "This bed reminds me of my own bed at St. Maximin,—I can neither sleep nor breathe under those thick curtains, and upon those beds of down." At each word she looked at my mother with a remarkable expression. Her eyes were animated by fever, her cheeks, one in particular, were highly coloured, and varied in tint with every emotion which agitated her, as is always the case with persons suffering under a sudden attack of consumption. "Christine," said Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, "you know you must not talk, the physicians have positively forbidden it; and if you mean to recover you must attend to them." The patient shook her head, with the smile so afflicting to those who know that but few days, perhaps but few hours, only are between that moment and dissolution.

"Laurette," said Madame Lucien, "come near me, for I am sure that a death-bed does not alarm you." She took my hand; she perceived the effect which its burning pressure made upon me. "Ah!" said she, "I meant your mother; to you I am but a stranger, and I frighten you, do I not?" I wept, and only replied by embracing her. She pushed me gently away, saying, "No, no; do not embrace me, the air I breathe is poisonous. When I recover, as mamma says——"

We took leave, and this adieu was the last. We saw her no more. She died the following day. As soon as my mother received the intelligence she ordered her horses and hastened to the Hotel of the Interior; Lucien was at Neuilly. My mother went there to seek him, but we were not permitted to see him. My brother-in-law came to our carriage to tell us that he was not in a state to speak even to his sisters or his mother. "I have torn him from that unfortunate house," said he, "where everything reminds him of the loss he has just experienced. He was in the most violent despair."

Madame Lucien was buried in the park of the mansion at le Plessis Chamant. Her husband erected there to her memory a monument of white marble, surrounded by an iron palisade. When he went to le Plessis he took his daughters there, that they might pray with him, young as they were. I have heard these notions ridiculed; but for my own part, being of opinion that the dead may be long lamented, I can easily believe that Madame Lucien was a character to excite such regret, and that it might be great and long-during. I shall never forget when my mother was on the point of death in 1799, Madame Lucien was with Madame Bonaparte the mother, and that they came to seek and comfort the poor young girl whom both believed an orphan!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

An offer of marriage, and my mother's projects—Madame de Caseaux's interference—Junot's arrival at Paris—His interview with the First Consul at Malmaison—Long and interesting conversation of Junot with Bonaparte—The First Consul threatened with danger—Othello and Madame Fourès—Bonaparte's sentiments towards Kléber, and his agitation—His advice to Junot, and the appointment of Junot to the command of Paris—Junot lodges at Méo's—His predilections for Burgundians—His hotel in the Rue de Verneuil—Project for his marriage—Its rupture—Junot's first visit to my mother, and the society of the Faubourg St. Germain—Translation of the body of Turenne to the Invalides.

I WAS now arrived at an epoch always remarkable in the life of a woman, and particularly so in mine, on account of the immense change which then took place in my situation. I speak of my marriage. As it renewed the bonds formerly subsisting between my family and that of the First Consul, I am bound to give a faithful account of all the circumstances attending it. They all relate even more to the First Consul than to Junot and myself, and they place him in a light no way connected with the days of his glory, military or political.

My mother was very unwell; the cruel malady under which she at length succumbed had already taken possession of her. She went out but little, reclined the greater part of the day upon her sofa, and received in the evening the friends who came to bear her company. One of the most assiduous of these was Madame de Caseaux, who was sincerely attached to her. I was myself intimately connected with this lady's daughter, and few days passed that did not bring us together.

My mother at that time had a marriage for me in

contemplation; probably it might have conduced to my happiness, but Madame de Caseaux thought not on account of the great difference of age between my mother's intended son-in-law and myself. "Laurette, Laurette," said she, enforcing her words with her extended finger, "it is not wise, my child, to marry one's grandfather."

My mother did not like contradiction in the most trivial matters; and it may be easily conceived that the very reasonable opposition of her devoted friend on an affair of so much importance irritated her extremely. Her displeasure proceeded to the extent of preventing my visits to Madame de Caseaux when she was unable to accompany me herself; on this point I must say she was unjust to her friend, who would speak her mind to her, or to me before her, on the subject of this marriage, but never permitted herself to mention it except in her presence,—her rigid principles absolutely interdicting such an interference in the relations of mother and child.

As soon as Junot arrived in Paris he hastened to his general, who was then at Malmaison. What events had taken place since their separation! What miracles had not one man accomplished! How many fresh laurels were flourishing around him! Junot, in approaching him, was oppressed by a thousand sentiments, in which, no doubt, joy preponderated; but it was chastened by a profound respect, which, "far from diminishing," he has often said to me, "his affection for Bonaparte had no other effect than to increase it."

I did not, at the time of which I am now speaking, understand this as I have since done. It is a fact that at this period Napoleon had about him five or six men whose sentiments towards him were inexplicable; they were more than devoted. Those who are dead have left no successors. I do not say that Napoleon has not since been served with attachment, and even devotedness; but every one reasons upon his own premises; and, I repeat, I have not since seen the same hallowed sentiment of which I now speak.

"Well, Junot," said the First Consul to him, as soon as they were alone, "so you were stupid enough to suffer yourself to be taken by those English. But, according to your letter to me from Marseilles, it would appear that they expected you. And, notwithstanding the positive orders I left with him, Kléber would not let you go? It is all very well; apparently, he was afraid that I should have too many friends about me. What littleness! I know very well that he did not love me; but to adopt such paltry means of expressing his enmity! Have you seen his letter to the Directory?" Junot replied that Duroc had given it him to read while at breakfast. "However," continued the First Consul, "his tragical end has cleared all accounts. I have had a great loss in him; but the irreparable loss, my friend, was Desaix! Desaix!—this is one of the misfortunes which strikes the country. I shall never console myself for the loss of Desaix!"[1] The First Consul continued his walk some time without speaking; he was visibly affected. But he never suffered a too lively emotion to be long observed; and returning to Junot, he said to him with an enchanting expression of goodness: "Well, and what do you propose to do? I have always told you that I would give you proofs of my friendship as soon as I was in a condition to do so. What are your views? Are you inclined for the service?" and he looked askance at Junot with an air of good-humoured malice. "Have you a mind that I should send you to the army of the Rhine?"

Junot's coloured heightened to crimson, which always happened when he was strongly affected. "Do you already wish to relieve yourself of me, my general? However, if you command it, I will go and let General Moreau know that the officers of the army of Italy have lost none of their courage in Egypt."—"There now, my youngster, off at a word!" said the First Consul. "No,

[1] I have heard the Emperor, speaking of General Desaix in 1808, say, in the presence of above thirty persons, chiefly strangers,—"Desaix was the most estimable man I have known: if he had not died I should have made him second to myself."

no, M. Junot, you do not quit me in such a hurry. I have a great regard for General Moreau; but not sufficient to make him a present of my best friends." And he gave Junot a pull of the ear.

"Junot," continued he, in a more serious tone, "I intend to appoint you Commandant of Paris. It is a place of confidence, particularly at this moment, and I cannot make a better choice. But"—and he looked narrowly round him, as they continued to walk, to observe whether any one was within reach of hearing,[1]—"but you must reflect before you accept this post. You must at once add ten years to your age; for if it be necessary that the Commandant of Paris should be attached to my person, it is equally so that he should be extremely prudent, and that he should pay the utmost attention to whatever concerns my safety."—"Ah! my general!" exclaimed Junot.—"Be quiet," said the First Consul, "and speak low. Yes, you must watch over my safety. I am surrounded with dangers. I should make no effort to avoid them if I were still the General Bonaparte vegetating at Paris before and even after the 4th of October. Then my life was my own—I cared little for it; but now it is mine no longer; my destiny has been exalted, it is connected with that of a great nation, and for this reason my life is menaced. The powers of Europe, who would divide France, wish me out of their way." He knit his brow, drew his hand across his forehead as if to banish an importunate idea; then, recovering an air of perfect calmness, he passed his arm under Junot's, and resumed the conversation on State affairs.

"I am about to appoint you Commandant of Paris, as I told you; but you must marry. That is not only suitable to the dignity of the situation you will occupy, but I know you, and require it of you for your own interest." After a long pause, he asked, "What is

[1] This conversation took place in the park of Malmaison, and lasted above an hour; it was the second time that Junot had seen the First Consul, and not the first, as I have said above.

become of Othello?"[1]—"He is still in Egypt, general, but I intend to have him brought over by the first convoy."—The First Consul made an inclination of the head in token of assent. "And the mother?" said he to Junot. "She also remains in Egypt, general; the commissary-general has taken care of her."—"That is well." And here the First Consul stopped short, then walked on again; assumed an air of embarrassment not usual with him, and at length, standing before a tree, plucking off its leaves, after having cast his eyes round to see if any one were near. "And Pauline,[2] what has become of her?" asked he, with an accent of marked interest. "I have learned," he continued, with a bitter smile, "and that from the English journals, that Kléber treated her ill after my departure; my attachment, it would seem, was title sufficient to proscription from him! Those whom I loved had not the good fortune to please him." Junot made no answer. He felt, as he has since told me, that he could not accuse Kléber, who had just fallen by so tragical a death, and he was silent.

"Did you not hear?" said the First Consul, a little out of humour, and raising his voice. "Is it true that this man acted brutally, as the English relate, towards a woman so mild and amiable as this poor Bellilote?"—"I was not with General Kléber when all this took place, general; but I know that in fact she was not well used by him, and that when she had occasion to request her passport it was by the intervention of Desgenettes that she obtained it, without which I believe the general-in-chief would have detained her a long time waiting for it." Junot smiled, without, however, any other idea than the detention of Madame Fourès; but Napoleon misunderstood the smile, and seizing Junot's arm, griped it so violently as to leave the marks of his hand; he became pale, and said with a voice trembling rather with anger than emotion: "What do you understand? What do you

[1] A natural child which had been born to Junot in Egypt of a young Abyssinian slave named Araxarane.

[2] Madame Fourès.

mean? Could that man——" and he was so violently agitated that his words could not find utterance. It was not love, it was not even remembrance of love, which produced this almost alarming state; the simple suspicion that Kléber might have succeeded him in the affections of Madame Fourès set his brain on fire.

Junot recalled him to the true state of the question; he told him that Madame Fourès had only encountered difficulties in procuring a passport from General Kléber, which in fact was the case with every one who at that time desired to leave Egypt. But he repeated that she had met with every assistance from the excellent Desgenettes, who obtained all she required, and was towards her, as he is to every one, and always will be, kind and obliging.

The First Consul quickly recovered himself, and changed the subject of conversation by recurring to that which was personal to Junot. He spoke at length upon the importance which he wished him to acquire in the situation of Commandant of Paris; and gave him such advice on this subject as a father would give to his son. This remarkable conversation lasted above an hour. I have omitted much of it that was interesting; but I have only been able to preserve with perfect accuracy that which related immediately to Junot and myself; and I have established it as a law, on no occasion to be departed from, never to record expressions of Napoleon upon uncertain recollections. Nothing is indifferent which proceeds from such a mouth; and we who have been attached to his person so closely and so long, are more than all others bound to be faithful in our reports of him.

On his arrival at Paris Junot had not set up any establishment. Uncertain of his next destination, he thought it useless to make arrangements which an order to depart might compel him to abandon at a moment's notice. He lodged at the house of Méo, a good restaurateur of that period, and whose hotel had some resemblance to the fine establishment of Meurice; but when the First Consul announced to him the remarkable change

which the place he was about to occupy would necessarily make in his situation, he desired him at the same time to find a residence suitable to his new dignity; and Junot requested his family, whom he had drawn around him at his hotel, to look out for one. There were, no doubt, great numbers in Paris in the open and cheerful situations of the Faubourg St. Germain or the Chaussée d'Antin, all handsome and newly decorated. I know not how they persuaded him to fix upon a hotel in the Rue de Verneuil, and even in the dullest and dirtiest part of it; but this house was hired, furnished, and ready for occupation in less than three weeks. Junot installed himself in it as Commandant of Paris in the course of the summer of 1800. With handsome carriages, the finest horses, and the best wines of Burgundy[1] in his cellars, he then commenced his search for a wife.

The First Consul had especially recommended him to marry a rich wife. "Willingly," replied Junot, "provided she please my taste; but how is that to be done, when almost all heiresses are superlatively ugly?"

He was one morning visiting a lady of his acquaintance, and who happened to be a friend of ours. He spoke of the order he had received from the First Consul to marry, and his own desire to enjoy domestic society. "Have you been to visit Madame de Permon?" inquired the person to whom he spoke. "No; and I reproach myself daily. But why ask?"—"Because I believe that her daughter would suit you exactly."—"Her daughter!" exclaimed Junot; "she was but a child when I went to Egypt."

"She is young, but no longer a child. She is sixteen. But attend: I have a great inclination to bestow her in marriage at the present moment, but her mother is so bent upon a match she proposes for her, and which has

[1] A mania which Junot carried to excess was that of being served only by Burgundians. It was natural that his countrymen should have the preference where there was an equality of talent; but if ever so heavy or stupid, the name of Burgundian was sufficient to ensure it. This was the history of the hotel in the Rue de Verneuil; a Burgundian found it for him, a Burgundian furnished it, and a Burgundian was put in charge of the establishment.

not common sense, for the intended is old enough to be her grandfather, that she turned a deaf ear when I opened my project to her the day before yesterday; though you must understand that the party in question is a charming bachelor, and one of the first names in France."

"And what would you have me do against all these obstacles?" said Junot, laughing. "You tell me of a woman with twenty admirers; I do not like so many rivals. Mademoiselle Loulou—I believe that is what she was called—must be a little personage of great pretensions, a spoilt child, and thoroughly insupportable. No, no; I kiss your hands;" and thus taking leave, he hastened out of the house.

From Madame d'Orsay, Junot went to call upon Madame Hamelin, another lady also of our acquaintance—an amiable woman who often visited my mother, and was much esteemed by her. Endowed with superior talents, she took pleasure when I was in company with her in bringing me into notice—a mark of kindness which goes direct to the hearts of women in general, and which mine was not backward in acknowledging.

Junot had scarcely entered when his search for a wife became the topic of conversation. "Ah," said she, "there is a young person whom I should like to recommend to you, but she is about to marry and must not be thought of."—"So," said Junot, "because she is going to marry, I am not to hear her name."—"Oh, with all my heart; you knew her when she was but a child. It is Mademoiselle de Permon."

Junot laughed; it seemed as if I haunted him. However, as Madame Hamelin's frankness and her intelligence were well known to him, and as she had pronounced my name with interest, he asked her some questions concerning me, which she answered with the feeling of an amiable and sensible woman.

"Why have you not paid your respects to her mother since your return?" she inquired, seeing his eyes fixed upon the garden with an air of absence. "I do not know, but it appears that I have done wisely," he replied,

smiling; "for suppose I had fallen in love with your young friend."—"Well! you would have married her. Are you not wishing to marry?"—"But you have told me yourself that Madame de Permon has a strong desire to marry her to M. de V——, and if she wills it, it will be, for she is not one to yield her resolutions; I have seen instances of that which I shall not forget." The same day, Junot, bearing in mind his conversation with Madame Hamelin, found out a person whom he knew to be intimate with my mother and me, and made himself acquainted with all that concerned me, and also with my mother's intentions respecting M. de V——; they were not doubtful, for she had no stronger desire than to conclude the marriage. Junot took his resolution at once; he had engaged to wait upon my mother with Madame Hamelin the following evening; however, he excused himself upon some pretext, but said nothing of the true cause.

At this time, my mother, much out of health, did not quit her sofa. My brother and I exerted ourselves to the utmost to lessen the ennui of her retirement. All her friends, and a crowd of acquaintances, assisted us in endeavouring to make her forget that she was condemned to seclusion for the cure of a complaint from which she might never recover. Thanks to the care and advice of Dr. Backer, she was now mending; as she did not suffer, we were gay. We had music and singing, and when we were not afraid of too much noise we danced to the sound of our own voices. We laughed and enjoyed ourselves; in short, we were happy.

Thus the summer of 1800 elapsed. The end of September arrived. A great change meanwhile had taken place in our family. The two marriages which my mother had proposed for me were broken off; one for pecuniary reasons, the other because I had thrown myself at her feet, entreating her, by her love for me, not to make me a sacrifice and my life miserable. My mother was perfectly amiable, and she loved me; she therefore broke off a marriage which, in other respects, was suitable enough, but to which I had so thorough an

antipathy that I should have ratified a doom of misery to myself and my husband in saying *Yes.* I was delighted with this change in my lot. All my friends, whether from attachment to me, or whether from that sentiment which makes a young girl always unwilling that her companion should marry before her—all my friends rejoiced in seeing me at liberty for the following winter.

One evening—it was the 21st of September—about a dozen persons were assembled in my mother's drawing-room, chatting, deciphering charades, and laughing, when suddenly the door opened, and the valet-de-chambre announced General Junot. In an instant, as by a stroke of magic, all was silence. This effect was so sudden and so striking that the general was a little embarrassed; but my mother's reception of him reassured him. She held out her hand to him, reproached him in the most friendly manner for the long delay of his visit, made him sit down by her side, and attended only to him.

The general could not have chosen a worse day for his visit to my mother; no individual of his acquaintance was present. The whole party belonged to the Faubourg St. Germain, and the sort of gratification a general of the Republic would find amongst a circle of emigrants returned within the last six months may be easily imagined. But my mother could act the mistress of the house to perfection. She saw that General Junot might find himself in a constrained position, and she exerted herself so effectually that he was very soon as much at his ease by her side as if he had been one of our most intimate associates.

The distinctive character of Junot's mind was acuteness and rapidity of penetration. He understood that this was not the place for speaking of the First Consul. He was determined to hear nothing to his prejudice; but neither would my mother, though she was no longer partial to him, have suffered anything to be said against him in her house. Junot spoke of Egypt, of what he had seen there which was foreign to our manners, with that ability which all who knew him are so well aware of. Albert, who had been spending the evening at Madame Leclerc's,

soon came in, and his presence emboldened Junot to propose to my mother that she should, on the following day, go to the Hotel de Salm to witness the procession which was to pass the Quai de Voltaire. The occasion was worth the trouble; it was the translation of the body of Turenne from the *Jardin des Plantes*, where it had been deposited since the violation of the tombs of St. Denis, to the *Musée des Augustins aux Invalides*. As Junot was to superintend the ceremony in his quality of Commandant of Paris, he was desirous that we should see him in his glory, and I believe this was the true motive of the zeal he manifested in overcoming my mother's objections on the score of her health. "Well then," said she at length, "I will go and see our two heroes pass, the living and the dead; but the living soldier must promise to come and dine with me after he has seen M. le Maréchal installed in his new habitation, or I shall not go." Junot promised, and retired, leaving a most advantageous impression on a party which, with the exception of my mother and brother, were certainly by no means predisposed in his favour.

The following day we repaired to the Hotel de Salm; we were conducted to a drawing-room, in which Junot had placed a large arm-chair, with pillows and a footstool for my mother; the valet-de-chambre of the general said he was ready to execute any orders that might be given to him. "Does your master," replied my mother, "suppose I am one of those invalids to whom he is conveying the body of Turenne?" She was, however, very sensible of the attentions paid to her, and when Junot passed, he saluted us in so marked a manner as to draw the attention of every one: a person in the crowd was heard to say, on seeing the general bow to my mother repeatedly, "No doubt that is the widow of the Marshal Turenne!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Junot's assiduities to my mother, and his silence towards me—First reports of my marriage with Junot—A family council—Visit of Junot—Demand of my hand—Consent of my mother and brother—Junot's declaration, and my embarrassment—Junot's thoughtlessness and silence towards Bonaparte—My mother's reproaches—Junot at the Tuileries—Duroc's good-nature—Conversation of Bonaparte with Junot relating to his marriage—Marriage portion and presents.

TEN days had elapsed from the 21st of September, when Junot first presented himself at my mother's, and now regularly every night he repeated his visit. He never spoke to me, but placed himself beside my mother's sofa, chatted with her, or with any of his acquaintance who happened to be present, but never approached the group to which I belonged; and if at this epoch he had ceased to come to our house I might have affirmed that I scarcely knew him.

But, however undistinguished I had been by any attention on his part, the society in which we moved had already decided that I was his destined bride; the report was brought to me by my friend Laure de Caseaux, and with great indignation I repeated it to my mother and brother; they partook of my feelings upon the subject, and having received a summons to attend my drawing-master, I left them in my mother's bedroom, still discussing the steps to be pursued, for it was yet but noon, and on account of the weak state of her health she did not rise before that time.

While we were thus respectively engaged, a carriage drove up to the door, and a waiting-maid came in to

inquire if General Junot could be admitted. "Yes, yes, let him come up," said my mother; "but, good God! what can bring him here at this hour?" Junot had scarcely entered the chamber before he asked permission to close the door; and, seating himself by the bedside, said to my mother, as he took her hand, that he was come to present a request, adding, with a smile, "and it must be granted." —"If it be possible, it is done," said my mother. "That depends upon you and him," replied the general, turning to Albert. He stopped a moment, and then continued, in the tone of a person recovering from a violent embarrassment, "I am come to ask the hand of your daughter; will you grant it me? I give you my word," and he proceeded in a tone of more assurance, "and it is that of a man of honour, that I will make her happy. I can offer her an establishment worthy of her and of her family. Come, Madame de Permon, answer me, with the frankness with which I put my request, Yes or No."

"My dear general," said my mother, "I shall answer with all the frankness you have claimed, and which you know to belong to my character; and I will tell you that, a few minutes before your arrival, I was saying to Albert that you were the man whom, of all others, I should choose for my son-in-law."—"Indeed!" exclaimed Junot joyfully. "Yes; but that says nothing for your request. First, you must understand that she has no fortune; her portion is too small to be of any value to you. Then, I am very ill, and I am not sure that my daughter will be willing to quit me at present. Besides, she is still very young. Reflect well upon all this, and add to it that my daughter has been educated amidst a society and in habits which it is very possible may displease you. Reflect for eight or ten days, and then come to me, and we will enter further into your projects."

"I will not wait twenty-four hours," said Junot firmly. "Listen, Madame de Permon; I have not taken my present step without having fully made up my mind. Will you grant me your daughter? Will you, Permon, give me your sister? I love her, and I again swear to you I will make her as happy as a woman can be."

Albert approached General Junot, and, taking his hand, said, in a voice of emotion, "My dear Junot, I give you my sister with joy; and believe me, the day when I shall call you brother will be one of the happiest of my life." —"And I," said my mother, extending her arms to him, "am happy beyond description in calling you my son." Junot, much moved, threw himself into her arms. "Well," said he, "and what will you think of me now?—that I am very childish and weak, I fear;" and, turning to my brother, he embraced him several times in a delirium of joy. "But now," said he, after a few moments, "I have still another favour to ask,—one upon which I set a high value, for it is most interesting to me."

"What is it?" asked my mother. "I desire, extraordinary as it may appear to you, to be myself permitted to present my petition to your daughter." My mother exclaimed against this demand; such a thing had never been heard of—it was absolute folly. "That may be," said Junot, in a firm but respectful tone; "but I have determined upon it; and since you have received me, since I am now your son, why would you refuse me this favour? Besides, it is in your presence and her brother's that I would speak to her."—"Ah, that makes a difference," said my mother; "but why this whim?"—"It is not a whim; it is, on the contrary, so very reasonable an idea that I should never have believed myself capable of it. Do you consent?"

My mother answered "Yes," and a messenger was despatched to my study, where I was drawing with M. Viglians, to summon me to my mother, an order which I obeyed immediately with the greatest tranquillity, for I supposed General Junot to be long since gone.

It is impossible to describe my sensations when on opening the chamber-door I perceived General Junot seated by my mother's bedside, holding one of her hands, and conversing in an animated manner with her. The general rose, offered me his place, took a seat beside me, then, having looked towards my mother, said to me in the most serious tone:—

"Mademoiselle, I am happy enough to have obtained the consent of your mother and brother to my solicitation for your hand; but I have to assure you that this consent, otherwise so valuable to me, will become null unless at this moment you can declare here in their presence that you willingly acquiesce in it. The step I am at this moment taking is not perhaps altogether consistent with established forms—I am aware it is not; but you will pardon me if you reflect that I am a soldier, frank even to roughness, and desirous of ascertaining that in the most important act of my life I am not deceiving myself. Will you then condescend to tell me whether you will become my wife? and, above all, whether you can do so without any repugnance?"[1]

Since I had been seated in the chair in which General Junot had placed me I felt as if in one of those extraordinary dreams in which a delusive similitude fatigues and perplexes the mind. I heard distinctly, and understood what was said, but no part of it seemed to attach itself to my situation; and yet it was necessary to give an immediate answer in one word upon which the fate of my whole life was to depend. The most perfect silence reigned in the apartment. Neither my mother nor my brother could with propriety interfere, and the general could only wait my answer. However, at the expiration of about ten minutes, seeing that my eyes still continued fixed on the ground, and that I did not reply, General Junot thought himself obliged to construe my silence into a refusal; and always impetuous, still more so perhaps in his sentiments than in his will, he insisted upon knowing his fate that very instant.

[1] I have dwelt upon these particulars, all well known to a number of persons still living in Paris, in order to answer by facts the vain declamations concerning my marriage in the Memorial of Las Cases. All these persons know whether my marriage was concluded because Junot believed me a Comnena. It is a point upon which I have a right to insist. It must be admitted that he did not take long to persuade, and my mother must have been a skilful magician if in the course of ten days she had accomplished making a man who was a republican at heart, a child of the Revolution, and the son of his own deeds, take to wife a young girl who was not pretty, and without fortune, only because her ancestors, three or four centuries before, had reigned at Constantinople. All that concerns us in the *Mémorial de Sainte Hélène* is manifestly false, and I prove it by facts.

"I see," said he, with an accent of bitterness, "that Madame de Permon was right when she told me that her consent was nothing in this affair. Only, Mademoiselle, I entreat you to give me an answer, be it *yes* or *no*."

My brother, who saw the change in Junot's manner, inclined towards me, and whispered in my ear, "Take courage, love; speak the truth, he will not be offended, even if you refuse him."—"Come, come, my child! you must answer the general," said my mother. "If you will not speak to him, give me your answer, and I will repeat it to him."

I was sensible that my situation began to be ridiculous, and that I ought to speak. But all the power upon earth could not have made me articulate a word, nor raise my eyes from the carpet. From my first entrance into the room my emotion had been so violent that the palpitation of my heart threatened to burst my corset. The blood now mounted to my head with such violence that I heard nothing but a sharp singing in my ears, and saw nothing but a moving rainbow. I felt a violent pain, and raising my hand to my forehead, stood up and made my escape so suddenly that my brother had not time to detain me. He ran after me, but could nowhere find me. The fact was, that as if started by an invisible power I had mounted the stairs with such rapidity that in two seconds I had reached the top of the house, and on recovering my recollection found myself in the attic. I came down again, and going to take refuge in my brother's apartments, met him returning from a search for me. He scolded me for being so unreasonable. I wept, and reproached him bitterly for the scene which had just taken place. He excused himself, embraced me, and drew me into a conversation which calmed my spirits; but he could by no means persuade me to return to my mother's room. I was resolute not to appear there again till General Junot was gone.

My brother on his return addressed the general, whom he found still much agitated. "I was," said he, "my dear general, for a moment of your opinion, and permitted my

sister to be brought here. But I now see that we have acted in this matter like children, and she, young as she is, has convinced me of it."—"Where is my poor Loulou, then?" said my mother. "I told you, my dear Junot, that such a step was absurd. Where is she?"—"In my room," said Albert, "where I have promised her that she shall not be molested."—"And my answer?" said Junot, with a gloomy air.—"Your answer, my friend, is as favourable as you can desire. My sister will be proud to bear your name—I repeat her own words; for any other sentiment you cannot ask it of her without disrespect."—"I am satisfied!" exclaimed Junot, embracing my brother. "She will be proud to bear my name, and I am content."

The conversation now became more calm, and after a short interval my mother said to Junot: "But tell me how you have achieved the greatest of your victories; how you have induced the First Consul to give his consent to your marriage with my daughter?"—"He does not know it yet," replied Junot.—"He does not know it!" exclaimed my mother; "you are come to ask my daughter in marriage, and the First Consul does not know it? Permit me to observe, my dear general, that your conduct has been very inconsiderate." My brother has since told me that he was at the moment of my mother's opinion. "I request you, Madame, to inform me in what respect my conduct can be blamable," Junot replied, with some *hauteur*.

"How can you ask such a question? Do you not know the coldness, and even disunion, which has succeeded to the friendship that once existed between the First Consul and myself? Do you think that he will consent to my daughter becoming your wife, and especially without fortune? and what, let me ask, would you do if when you communicate your intended marriage to him and ask his assent he should refuse it?"

"I should marry without it," answered Junot very resolutely. "I am no longer a child; and in the most important transaction of my life I shall consult my own convenience only, without listening to the petty passions of others."—"You say that you are no longer a child, and

you reason as if you were but six years old. Would you dissolve your connection with your benefactor and friend because it pleases you to make what he will call an imprudent marriage, that is to say, a marriage without fortune? For that is the reason he will give you; for you may easily suppose he will not tell you that it is because he does not like me. What will you do—what will you answer, when he gives you the option between my daughter and himself?"

"But he will never do so!" exclaimed Junot; "and if he could to such an extent forget my services and my attachment I should always remain a faithful son of France; she will not repulse me; and I am a general officer."—"And do you think us capable of accepting such a sacrifice?" said my mother. "And though my daughter is but sixteen years old, can you have formed so unworthy an opinion of her as to suppose that she would thus abuse her power over you?"

"My dear general," said Albert, who had not yet uttered a word during this discussion, "I believe that all this will be easily arranged; but permit me to observe in my turn that you have been a little too hasty in this affair; nevertheless, I have no doubt that all will be right, for I do not think with my mother that the First Consul will interfere as a party, and still less as a judge, in a question of such a nature as this."

Junot listened attentively; then looking at his watch, he suddenly took up his hat, and said to my mother, "I am going to the Tuileries. The First Consul is not yet in council. I will speak to him, and in an hour I shall return. He pressed Albert's hand, kissed my mother's, descended the staircase at two steps, jumped into his carriage, and cried out to the coachman, "To the Tuileries at a gallop, only do not overturn us, because I have business there in a hurry."

"Where is the First Consul?" was his salutation to Duroc.—"With Madame Bonaparte."—"My friend, I must speak to him this very instant."—"How you are agitated!" said Duroc, observing his flushed cheek and

trembling voice. "Is there alarming news?"—"No, no; but I must see the First Consul; I must this instant; I will tell you by and by why I am so peremptory."

Duroc pressed his hand, and as he understood that he could oblige him he lost no time in acquitting himself of his commission; and in a few moments Junot was introduced to the cabinet of the First Consul. "My general," said he, entering at once upon the subject, "you have testified a desire to see me married; the thing is settled —I am about to marry."—"Ah! ah! and you have run away with your wife? your air is perfectly wild."—"No, my general," replied Junot, endeavouring to calm his feelings for the crisis; for all my mother's objections started at once to his mind, and he felt fearful of a rebuff. "Whom are you going to marry, then?" said the First Consul, seeing that Junot did not speak.—"A person whom you have known from her childhood, whom you used to love, my general, of whom every one speaks well, and with whom I am distractedly in love—Mademoiselle de Permon."

The First Consul, contrary to his custom, was not walking while he conversed at the present moment. He was seated at his desk, which he was notching with his penknife. On hearing the name he leaped from his seat, threw away his penknife, and seized Junot by the arm, asking, "Whom did you say you meant to marry?"—"The daughter of Madame de Permon, that child whom you have so often held upon your knee when you were yourself a young man, my general."—"That is not possible; Loulou is not marriageable; how old is she?"—"Sixteen years within a month."—"It is a very bad marriage you would make; there is no fortune; and besides, how can you determine to become the son-in-law of Madame de Permon? Do you not know that woman as she is? you must mind what you are about, she is a spirit——"—"Permit me to observe, general, that I do not propose to marry my mother-in-law; and moreover, I believe——" Here he stopped short and

smiled.—"Well, and what do you believe?"—"That the discussions which had arisen between yourself and Madame de Permon have blended a shade of prejudice with the judgment you have formed of her. What I know perfectly well is, that she is surrounded by numerous friends of long standing, and I have seen the love which her children bear her. Her daughter lavishes such care upon her as only the heart of a devoted child is capable of, and has done so for two years past, to the injury of her own health. Her son——"—"Ah, that is a brave youth!"—"Well, my general, and do you believe that he could be what he is to his mother if Madame de Permon were not herself not merely a good mother but an excellent woman? Children are respectful and attentive to their mother, but to be to her what Mademoiselle Laurette and her brother are to Madame de Permon, she must deserve their respect. Nothing can give you an idea of their domestic virtues. Interrogate Madame Bonaparte, Madame Joseph, Madame Murat; these ladies will tell you how meritorious has been the conduct of Madame de Permon's children from the commencement of her severe illness."—"Is she so very ill, then?" inquired the First Consul with interest.—"Very ill; and the utmost care is necessary to her recovery, and to the relief of her sufferings."

The First Consul walked the room without speaking; he was serious, but not out of humour. At length he said, "But without fortune, I dare say; what portion has this young person?"—"I have not inquired."—"You were right in saying just now that you were distractedly in love. What extravagance! Did I not particularly recommend you to seek a rich wife? for you are not rich yourself."—"I beg your pardon, my general, I am very rich. Are you not my protector, my father? and when I inform you that I love a young girl who is poor, but without whom I should be miserable, I know that you will come to my assistance and portion my betrothed."

The First Consul smiled. "Oh, is that it? But how has this illness happened? Have you long been a visitor

at Madame Permon's?"—"Eleven days, my general; but it is two months since my attention has been attracted towards her daughter. I have been spoken to about her, and one of our common friends even wished to promote this marriage; but Mademoiselle Laurette was then destined to another husband, and after all that I had heard of her I would not visit the mother lest I should fall in love with the daughter. In the interval the projected marriage was broken off. I went accordingly to pay my respects to Madame de Permon, and my resolution was soon taken. But now, my general, I am about to give you still further advantage over me—I have acted more madly than you can imagine." Here he repeated the scene of the morning in its minutest details. The First Consul listened in silence, with great attention, and when Junot's narrative was ended, he replied:

"Though I recognise in all that you have just said the character of Madame de Permon, I cannot but approve her arguments as they respect me; and the sacrifice you have offered in the true spirit of a Paladin of the Crusades, could not be accepted either by her or Permon. You have, however, cut me off from the power of even remonstrating against this rash act by the confidence you have just reposed in me; besides, you will not, as you say, marry your mother-in-law; and if the young person be really such as you describe, I see no reason for being severe on the article of fortune. I give you 100,000 francs for your bride's portion, and 40,000 for her wedding-clothes. Adieu, my friend, I wish you happiness!" So saying, he pressed Junot's hand warmly, and said, laughing, as he resumed his seat, "Oh, you will have a terrible mother-in-law!" then added with a more serious air, "but an amiable and worthy brother-in-law."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Junot's haste to conclude our marriage—Unwillingness to quit my mother —A family scene—Intrigues to lead Junot to another marriage—M. de Caulaincourt's confidential advice—My marriage fixed for the 20th of October—The marriage of Murat and Caroline Bonaparte—Her beauty —An error corrected—Murat's character—Causes of Napoleon's coolness towards him—Murat's boasting, and a breakfast of officers—The mistress of the revels and the betraying cipher—Bonaparte's project of marrying his sister to Moreau—Calumnies on Caroline Bonaparte—Murat's person and dress.

THE preparations for my marriage were proceeding with activity; General Junot was extremely desirous that it should take place immediately; he had induced Madame Bonaparte the mother and Madame Leclerc to persuade my mother, and the 20th of October was the day already fixed upon, before I had been consulted upon the subject. It was on the 10th of that month that my mother proposed to me this speedy separation, to which no arguments she could use had any effect in reconciling me. M. de Caulaincourt, an old and faithful friend of the family, whom I had been in the habit of distinguishing by the affectionate epithet of "little papa," was summoned to the conference. Seated between my brother and myself, beside my mother's sofa, he earnestly enforced my mother's plea of the impatience of my lover, and finding this insufficient, began to explain that to his knowledge Junot was at present the object of much intrigue at the Tuileries; that Madame Bonaparte, always apprehensive of the influence which early intimacy and a sentiment of gratitude for early favours might give my mother over the mind of the First Consul, had seen their mutual

coldness with great complacency; had never attempted to widen the breach by irritation, judiciously considering that in such cases total oblivion is the most eligible result, and was now extremely disconcerted to find that Junot's marriage was likely to bring the family again into notice; to obviate this, she had attempted to produce a change in his views, and to direct them towards Mademoiselle Leclerc. To this, which was equally new to all his auditors, he added that delays are dangerous, that the First Consul might be induced by the influence of his wife to withdraw his consent, and that Junot himself might be worked to her purpose. My mother's pride now began to take the alarm, and her kind friend was obliged to soothe it to the utmost; and finally the result of all this consultation was that I gave my consent to fix the day for the 30th of October; sooner than this I positively refused to quit my mother.

My own marriage has so much occupied my attention that I have neglected to mention that of Madame Murat, which took place soon after the 8th November. Caroline Bonaparte was a very pretty girl, fresh as a rose; not to be compared, for the regular beauty of her features, to Madame Leclerc, though more pleasing perhaps by the expression of her countenance and the brilliancy of her complexion, but by no means possessing the perfection of figure which distinguished her elder sister. Her head was disproportionably large, her bust was too short, her shoulders were too round, and her hips too thick; but her feet, her hands, and her arms were models, and her skin resembled white satin seen through pink glass; her teeth were fine, as were those of all the Bonapartes; her hair was light, but no way remarkable. As a young girl, Caroline was charming; when her mother first brought her to Paris in 1798 her beauty was in all its rosy freshness. I have never seen her appear to so much advantage since that time. Magnificence did not become her; brocade did not hang well upon her figure, and one feared to see her delicate complexion fade under the weight of diamonds and rubies.

In the *Mémoires Contemporaines* it is asserted that when Murat demanded Mademoiselle Bonaparte in marriage the First Consul made great difficulties in giving his consent. This is part of the plan now so generally adopted, of representing Napoleon and his family in an unfavourable light. But here, as usual, this disposition to accuse throws a veil over the truth. Bonaparte's repugnance is said to be founded on the ignoble birth of Murat. I can affirm with certainty that the author has been misinformed.

The true cause of Napoleon's little regard for Murat (for, notwithstanding their alliance, he never was attached to him) was Murat's imprudent conduct when he came to Paris to present the banners taken by the army of Italy, and after his return to headquarters. Those who know the character of Napoleon as I know it will easily understand that Murat would lose much ground in his general's favour by whispering a boast of his credit with the Directory and the war ministry through the means of Madame Bonaparte and Madame Tallien. I will here give an anecdote which occurred soon after he had rejoined his general, and which reached the ears of the latter on the very day. Junot was at that time wounded and in his bed, and could not have been the informer upon a fact of which he was himself ignorant for some time.

Murat gave a breakfast to Lavalette, some other officers of the general staff, and many of his friends, chiefly young men belonging to the cavalry, whose company Murat preferred to an association with officers of his own rank; perhaps from that habit of boasting for which he afterwards became so remarkable, and to which he would find his inferiors more complaisant than his equals.

The breakfast had been very gay. Much champagne had been drunk, and there seemed no occasion for a supplement, but Murat proposed punch, adding that he would make it himself.

"You never drank better," said he to his companions; "I have learned to make it off a charming Créole, and if I

could add all the circumstances of that education, you would like it still better." Then, ringing for his valet, he ordered not only all that was necessary for ordinary punch, but a number of accessories, such as tea, oranges instead of lemons, etc., and said aloud, "And be sure not to make a mistake; bring that Jamaica rum which was given me at Paris."

He went to his travelling-case and took from it a beautiful utensil of silver gilt, made purposely to extract the juice of lemons or oranges without squeezing them with the hand. He then proceeded in the whole affair in a method which proved that he had been under a good instructor. The punch was found excellent, so excellent that the bowl was emptied and filled again several times; confidence increased with each renewal; the guests wished to know how such good things were to be learned, and Murat, who perhaps was not quite clear-headed, replied that the finest and prettiest woman in Paris had taught him this and many other things. Then, as may be supposed, questions multiplied; with the mirth and folly of childhood they desired to hear the whole history. It appears Murat could not resist, but related much that was unsuitable to the breakfast-table of a party of hussar officers. But the most unlucky part of the affair in its consequences was that, without pronouncing any name, he indicated so plainly the personages concerned that inductions were speedily drawn and commentaries followed. A breakfast, a dinner, and a supper, all in the same day, in the country, that is to say, the Champs Elysées, formed the principal facts of this boastful tale, and the finest woman in Paris (the prettiest was not quite so clear), all this told the name, and these young heads translated it with much more ease than at that moment they could have construed a verse of Virgil. Further explanation was unnecessary; when one of the party, taking up the lemon-squeezer, discovered in his examination of it that it had a cipher upon the handle which was not that of Murat. "Ah," exclaimed the young madcap, "now for full information; here we may learn to read as well as to make punch;"

and, brandishing the little utensil which Murat, who retained sense enough to see that this was going too far, wished to snatch from him, he looked again at the handle, and began, "Ba, be, bi, bo; Bo,—bon,—bona!" Murat at length succeeded in quieting him, and, the breakfast finished, the chief of the guests forgot the particulars of the morning's entertainment. But two or three, who felt that they might speak without indiscretion, since nothing had been confided to them, repeated the whole history of the punch; on a theatre so fraught with wonders as Italy was at that moment, the tale made little impression generally, but all the circumstances of the bacchanalian scene reached the ears of the general. His jealous humour was awakened, and for a moment he proposed requiring an explanation from Murat, but reflection showed him how unwise such a proceeding would be, and he abandoned all thoughts of inquiring into the true circumstances of the case; whether they ever came to his knowledge I know not.

The silver lemon-squeezer disappeared. Murat professed to regret its loss extremely, and reported that some of his giddy companions had thrown it out of the window in sport, and that it had never been recovered. He averred also that the young man who pretended to have read the cipher had his eyes so dazzled by the fumes of the punch that he had, in fact, mistaken M for B, and that the letter J stood for his own name (Joachim).

This little history was talked of for twenty-four hours, but offered only vague conjectures to those who were but imperfectly acquainted with the parties concerned, which was the case with almost all the guests except Lavalette and Duroc, who thought it not advisable to take further notice of it, and thought, indeed, that the cipher might have been J. M. For my own part, I believe so too; but General Bonaparte, I have reason to think, was not so credulous; and the favour shown him on occasion of the expedition to Egypt—a favour which certainly his general had not solicited for him—seemed to confirm his impolitic boasting, and to indicate that his interest with the Direc-

tory was supported by a protector which could not please Napoleon. With respect to the fact itself, I apprehend that there was more of lightness in it on Murat's part than of reality. I have known the opinion of persons of the family respecting it, who perhaps saw things in their worst light from being in a degree inimical to Josephine. They excused Murat on account of his youth, but were not so indulgent towards Madame Bonaparte.

Junot, whom the *Mémoires Contemporaines*, I know not why, make to interfere in the affairs of Murat and Napoleon, did not believe that the general had any cause for his jealousy of Murat, for jealous he certainly was; and it is the same with respect to another person of whom I shall have occasion to speak, and towards whom General Bonaparte's ill-will also took its rise in Italy.

When, therefore, Murat requested the hand of Caroline Bonaparte, the First Consul was very much disposed to refuse it him, but by no means on account of the obscurity of his birth. It is absurd to make him think and act in that manner at this epoch. Murat was in love with Mademoiselle Bonaparte; but in those days of our glory there were twenty young generals round Napoleon who were at least his equals, and whose fame was at that period even greater than his. The First Consul, on his return from Egypt, had a project for marrying his sister to Moreau: this may give the scale of qualification he required in his brother-in-law,—much distinction from glory, and none from birth. I know also, for the First Consul has himself told me so, that he once had an idea of giving his sister to Augereau.[1] Caroline Bonaparte, also, was passionately in love with Murat. But this love did not take its rise from Joseph's embassy to Rome; Caroline was at that time, at the most, from eleven to twelve years of age. I do not even believe that Murat ever saw her at Rome. If this love really were anterior to his return from Egypt, it must be dated from their meeting at the Serbelloni Palace at Milan. At any rate

[1] I shall hereafter relate on what occasion this subject of conversation arose between the Emperor and myself in 1809.

I can assert that nothing had occurred to render this marriage desirable to the Bonaparte family, as the *Mémoires Contemporaines* have said. Caroline Bonaparte married with a reputation as pure and as fresh as her complexion and the roses of her cheeks. I hope I shall not be accused of partiality towards her; but I must be just and speak the truth. I can do so with the more certainty, as, at the epoch of her marriage, and during some preceding years, the connection between us was very intimate.

With respect to Murat's beauty and the nobleness of his figure, it is a point which will bear discussion. I do not admit that a man is handsome because he is large and always dressed for a carnival. Murat's features were not good, and I may even add that, considering him as detached from his curled hair, his plumes, and his embroidery, he was plain. There was something of the negro in his countenance, though his nose was not flat; but very thick lips, and a nose, which, though aquiline, had nothing of nobleness in its form, gave to his physiognomy a mongrel expression at least. I shall speak again of his person and of his talents, which deserve more circumstantial consideration; at present, I have to notice that he and Caroline were married soon after the 8th November, and that at the period of my marriage she was in the eighth month of her pregnancy with the Prince Achilles.

CHAPTER XL.

Satisfaction caused by my marriage in the Bonaparte family—Madame Bonaparte jealous of my mother—My mother's sufferings, and preparations for my marriage—Details respecting the family of Junot—His elder brother in Egypt—Imperious will of Bonaparte—His refusal of a passport to Junot's brother—Junot's brother taken prisoner by the English—His return, and the melancholy death of his son—Remarkable circumstances attending the child's death—Its extraordinary attachment to its father—The event related to the First Consul—Conversation between Bonaparte and Corvisart upon the subject.

MY marriage delighted Madame Bonaparte the mother: Lucien, Louis, and Joseph Bonaparte, Madame Leclerc, and Madame Bacciochi, rejoiced in the alliance from personal motives; they considered it a sort of victory gained over Madame Bonaparte. The latter, from the reasons of jealousy mentioned before, and which she had sense enough never to profess, though every one in the palace was satisfied that a tacit hostility existed between my mother and her, had laboured zealously to prevent it; and, knowing that my mother was well aware of this, was herself the first person to speak to me of it after my marriage. Her jealousy was, however, unfounded; at this period Napoleon was much attached to Josephine, and she might, if she pleased, have acquired a great influence over him; this she never possessed, as I shall often have occasion to show.

The 30th of October approached, and our domicile, usually so peaceful though cheerful, and especially regular in the hours and manner of living, was now entirely transformed. My poor mother concealed her sufferings, and told me that she had never been better.

She frequently went out to make purchases which she would trust to no one else, and which her taste certainly enabled her to choose better than any other person would have done, but which I should have totally declined if I had believed them to have caused her the smallest pain. All that I could say on the subject would, however, have been wholly unavailing; and my brother and I had agreed that it was better not to contradict her. All, therefore, proceeded rapidly. The day when I was to quit my mother drew very near, and I may safely say, brilliant as was the situation it promised me, I saw its approach with terror.

Junot's family, to whom he was religiously attached, consisted of a father and mother, both in perfect health, and without any infirmity, the father at this time about sixty years of age, and the mother something older; an elder brother married, two uncles, and two sisters, both married, — the younger to a landed proprietor named Maldan, and the elder, against the wishes of her parents, to a cousin-german; and, as generally happens with marriages not sanctioned by the parental blessing, this turned out ill — they had many children and were unhappy.

As soon as Junot's marriage was fixed he sent his brother into Burgundy to fetch his father and mother, and his wife. M. Junot, the elder brother, was not only a respectful son, an affectionate brother, a tender husband and father, but he was also a man of unimpeachable honour, and of the severest probity. Bonaparte, who knew his worth, was bent upon taking him on his expedition to Egypt; and when Junot obtained leave to visit his family before he set out he was expressly commanded to bring his brother back with him. Fraternal affection, and the great prospects held out to him, wrung from him an unwilling assent. He took leave of a beloved wife and an idolised infant, his only child, a boy two years and a half old, from whom he had yet scarcely been separated for an hour, and proceeded with his brother to Toulon. Here, however, he completely repented, and, too late,

endeavoured to obtain his dismissal. Bonaparte had appointed him to a confidential situation on his civil staff, and had too much esteem for his probity to permit him to recede. In despair he embarked on board *l'Orient*—in despair he reached Egypt; and though he never neglected his duties, he never ceased importunately to demand his dismissal. But the general was not to be moved; and it was not till after the departure of Bonaparte himself that my home-sick brother-in-law obtained leave to return to Europe. But fresh troubles awaited him: the vessel in which he sailed was taken by the English, and, with the loss of all the property he had with him, he was, after an imprisonment of some months at Mahon, landed at length on the coast of France. Rejoicing in the thought of reposing at last under his own roof, he reached it to learn that the son he adored was no more. The truly affecting manner of his darling's death was not made known to him till his wife had given birth to another child; but he never ceased to feel for this one a sentiment of greater tenderness than any of his other children inspired.

The cause of this infant's death, extraordinary as it may seem, was the ardour of his attachment to his father. He had bid him adieu, and had seen him depart; but when he found that he did not speedily return, his grief, at first moderate became ungovernable; for some days he cried without cessation, perpetually inquiring where was his papa. At length his useless tears were intermitted, but his sighs, his pallid cheeks, and constant recurrence to the subject uppermost in his thoughts, showed that his grief was not abated. His mother, observing with the acuteness peculiar to a mother's love that the indefinite idea produced by the uniform answer to his question that his father was gone away, only increased his distress, at last replied that he was at Bussy, a small estate the family possessed a few miles from Dijon. "Then let us go to Bussy," said the infant, with the first expression of joy he had shown since his afflicting loss. The family made a rule of indulging all his wishes, and affording

every diversion that could be supposed to alleviate his sorrow, and a journey to Bussy was undertaken; but the disappointment here experienced added to the malady which had now taken deep hold upon him; in turn, a removal to the houses of all his relations was tried, but in vain; at the end of a twelvemonth this extraordinary infant, who at the time of his father's departure was one of the finest, most healthy, and animated of children, expired with the dear name of papa still upon his lips.

The melancholy circumstances of this event were related to me a few weeks after my marriage; and it happened that some anecdotes of extraordinary children formed the subject of conversation at Malmaison one evening about that time, and I related this interesting tale, then fresh in my mind. The First Consul, who usually did not enter at all into such subjects, paid great attention to what I was saying, and, when I had done, asked me whether I had not abused my privilege of historian, and had not, of a very simple fact, created a romance, the hero of which was a child thirty months old.

"General Junot," I replied, "must be my guarantee, general, for the truth of what I have stated; and I can further assure you that, far from having added to the affecting parts of my little history, I have curtailed them; and if you heard the same tale related by my worthy mother-in-law, who nursed the poor babe through the whole of its long agony, you would find mine very cold in comparison."

The First Consul walked to and fro for some time without saying a word. This is known to have been his habit when deep in thought. Suddenly he raised his head, and, looking around him, asked for Corvisart, who soon appeared. "Corvisart," said the First Consul, "is it possible that a child should die of grief in consequence of no longer seeing some one it loves, — its nurse, for example?"—"I believe not," said Corvisart; "at the same time nothing is impossible; but nothing can be more rare than such a case, happily, or else what would become of us, we could not wean a child."

The First Consul looked at me triumphantly, and said, "I was sure of it." To this I said that I thought Dr. Corvisart had been unfairly interrogated, and that I begged permission to put the question to him in its true shape. I then, in a few words, repeated the history of my little nephew; and scarcely had he heard me out than he exclaimed, that is quite another case; that a nurse was replaced by a governess, who lavished the same cares upon the child, and gave it food at the hours it had been accustomed to; but that affection distressed by absence, as that of my nephew had been, might cause death, and that the case was not even of very rare occurrence. "I have in my portfolios," said this very skilful man, "a multitude of notices relative to the affections of children; and if you should read them, general, you would find not only that the germs of the passions exist in their young hearts, but that in some children these passions are developed in an alarming manner. Jealousy, as well as poison, will kill children of three years of age, and even younger."—"You think, then, that this little Junot died of grief from ceasing to see his father?" asked the First Consul.

"After what Madame Junot has just related, I cannot doubt it; and my conviction is confirmed by her having, without being aware of it, described all the symptoms of that malady of which only beings endowed with the most exquisite sensibility are susceptible. The child is happy in its early death, for he would have been to be pitied throughout his existence, and would have met with a perpetual succession of disappointments."

The First Consul rubbed his forehead frequently while Corvisart was speaking. It was evident that his repeated refusals to permit my brother-in-law's return to Europe were agitating his mind, and I am sure that, had the light been directed to his eyes, I should have seen them moist.

"Is Junot, your brother-in-law, still in Paris?" said he. —"Yes, general!"—"Will you tell him that I wish to see him? Is Junot acquainted with the nature of his nephew's death?"—"I believe not, general; for my

brother-in-law has himself only learnt it since his wife's accouchement."

He again passed his hand over his forehead, and shook his head with the air of a person who would drive away a painful thought; but he never permitted it to be supposed that he was long under the influence of any predominating emotion; he walked again the length of the room, and then placing himself directly in front of Corvisart, said to him with comic abruptness, "Corvisart, would it be better that there should be doctors, or that there should be none?" The modern Hippocrates replied to the malicious glance which accompanied the question, by one of equal meaning, then parried the attack with a jest, and added, "If you wish me to speak conscientiously, general, I believe that it would be as well if there were not any." We all laughed, when Corvisart continued and said, "But then there should be no *old women.*"

CHAPTER XLI.

Thoughtless observation of my mother to Junot respecting nobility, and its prompt correction—Intrigues to break off Junot's marriage—Great number of emigrants in Paris—A young girl seeks Fouché—Affecting scene, and Fouché's sang-froid—Fouché compassionate!—The Marquis des Rosières and his daughter—The ancient lieutenant of the king, and *escapades* of Fouché—The net of government—The emigrants do justice to the glory of our arms—Junot's visits to my mother, and the news of the succeeding day—The Duke de Mouchy, M. de Montcalm, the Prince de Chalais, MM. de l'Aigle, and M. Archambeau de Perigord—Rudeness of the Marquis d'Hau——t—Text of a curious letter, addressed by Berthier to Junot from Madrid during an embassy—The passages omitted—Berthier, and the gift of tongues—Amusing adventure of Berthier at Milan—The tailor and the landlady.

THE rapidity with which my marriage was pressed had this singularity in it, that those of our friends who were at this time in the country, or at watering-places, heard of it only when it was completed. To many of them it was unwelcome news; and some of our noble relatives reminded my mother that though my father had been of plebeian origin she was not; and that she was wanting in respect to herself in bestowing her daughter upon an upstart general of the Revolution. My mother unadvisedly repeated these observations to General Junot, to whom it may be supposed they were not very acceptable; my mother, observing this, rectified the error with her characteristic grace. "And why," she continued, "should this offend you? Do you think me capable of being affected by such opinions? Do you imagine that I regret having given you my child—having named you my son, and the brother of my Albert? No, my dear Junot" (and she cordially pressed his hand as she said it), "we are now united for life and death!"

Junot has since told me that this explanation given by my mother had produced a very good effect on him. For some days past he had been disturbed by reports that my family were desirous of breaking off the match; and that another more eligible having offered, my disinclination towards him would be made the pretence for dismissing him. Another marriage was also strongly pressed upon him, but Junot was too much engaged in honour and in heart to recede; and these attempts had no result, unless it were that of impressing me with a slight degree of hostility against a personage who had thus intrigued to exclude me from a society in which I was entitled, from various reasons, to hold a leading rank.

The emigrants were now returning in crowds: La Vendée was settling peaceably; many persons connected with the nobility were repairing to Paris as a more secure asylum than the provinces. Fouché, the minister of police, on whom their fate so much depended, was wicked only in circumstances which had immediate reference to himself; otherwise he was capable of good actions, of which the following is an example: In the month of September of the year 1800, Fouché was frequently told that a young woman, indifferently dressed, but very pretty, asked a private audience of him, but without claiming any acquaintance with him or making use of any name to obtain an introduction, while she persisted in refusing to state her own name or residence. Fouché, who at this time had too many affairs of importance upon his hands to be able to spare any attention to one which offered only an appearance of gallantry, took no notice of this. The young girl, however, continued to besiege his door, notwithstanding the insults of the domestics, always so plentifully lavished upon misfortune, till at length the first valet, taking pity upon her, approached and inquired why she did not write to the citizen-minister. "You might," said he, "by that means obtain an audience, which, I believe, is what you want, is it not?"

The young person said it was, but that her name was unknown to the minister, who would therefore probably

refuse her request. The poor child wept as she pronounced the last words; the valet looked at her and pondered. Whether his thoughts were what they should be I do not pretend to say, but his resolution was quickly taken. He looked at his watch, and found that it was not yet eleven o'clock, and that, consequently, his master would not have finished his breakfast. "Wait a few minutes," said he to the young girl; "but tell me, do you live far off?"—"Yes; very, very far!" The valet, who was now examining her faded black dress, said to himself, "But how the devil am I to take her in, equipped in that fashion?" His eyes, raised to inspect her bonnet, at that moment fell upon a most lovely countenance, and he added: "Bah! I should be very absurd to trouble myself about her dress; wait for me, my child."

"Citizen minister," said he, as he entered the private cabinet where his master was breakfasting, and at the same time pursuing his business; "there is without a young girl, who for this month past has come daily to speak to you; she weeps, and pretends that her business concerns life and death; she seems very much distressed. Shall I bring her in?"—"Hum!" said Fouché; "another of the intrigues of those women who solicit the pardon of their brothers and cousins without ever having had either father or mother. How old is this one?"—"About eighteen, citizen minister."

"It is as I guess, then. And thou, honest fellow, hast taken charge of her introduction? But I am armed at all points. Bring the nymph in, and let her look to it if she have not her patent."[1]

The valet introduced his protégée. On seeing her, Fouché betrayed, by a movement of surprise, the effect which her really distinguished manner, compared with her worn-out apparel, made on him. A sign from the minister sent away the valet. "What do you want with me,

[1] Fouché, who, as all the world knows, was a moral man, one day had all the female frequenters of the Palais Royal and similar resorts taken up, that he might compel them to take out a patent. He chose to have order even in disorder.

my dear child?" said he to his young visitor. She threw herself on her knees before him, and joining her hands, "I am come," said she, sobbing, "to beg the life of my father." Fouché started as if a serpent had crossed his path, in hearing a petition for human life proceed from such lips. "And who is your father?" said he; "what is his name?"—"Ah! you will kill him!" she cried, in a voice trembling with terror, as she perceived Fouché's sallow complexion take a still more livid tint, and his white lips contract; "you will kill him!"—"Peace! simpleton as you are. Stand up and tell me the name of your father. How came he to be in Paris, if he be in fear for his life?"

The young lady then related their history; it was short and affecting. Her father, the Marquis des Rosières, after having been several times made prisoner in La Vendée, was taken at last with arms in his hands, and had escaped by a miracle; but closely pursued, almost tracked, he had at length arrived at Paris as the safest place of refuge. His daughter was to have rejoined him, with her mother, and a young sister about twelve years of age. "But," continued she, "I lost my mother and sister, and arrived here alone."—"How then did they die so suddenly?" asked Fouché. "The Blues killed them," said she in a low voice, casting down her eyes; for she feared Fouché would impute it to her as a crime to denounce that of the republican soldiers.

"Where do you lodge?" said the minister, after a moment's silence. Mademoiselle des Rosières appeared to hesitate. "Very well," said Fouché, stamping his foot, "you will not tell me where you live? If you do not tell me with a good grace, my people will know where to find you two hours hence, or sooner." Incapable of resistance, Mademoiselle des Rosières again fell upon her knees, extending her hands to him. "Come, be quiet, let us have no tragedy—I do not like it; only tell me if I may depend upon your father. If I obtain his pardon, can I depend upon him?"

The expression of Mademoiselle des Rosières's coun-

tenance at this moment required no interpreter. "You are a silly child," said Fouché, with an accent of dissatisfaction; "when I wished to know if I might depend upon your father, it was in the name of the First Consul. Did you suppose I wanted to make him a police spy?" He wrote the address of Mademoiselle des Rosières on a card, and before she left the room asked her why she applied to him rather than to the First Consul? "By my father's desire," she answered; "he thought you would have known his name." The minister was instantly struck with a remembrance which had escaped him; but he still doubted. "Tell your father to write me word this very day whether he were not a lieutenant of the king before the Revolution." M. des Rosières's answer was in the affirmative. He had been the king's lieutenant in Brittany and in Burgundy, or rather in Franche-Comté, and in this capacity had had the good fortune to be very useful to the young Abbé Fouché. In a question of town-walls escaladed, the doors of a seminary forced; in fine, of very grave matters, the lieutenant of the king, like the good Samaritan, had enveloped the whole in the mantle of charity. I know not precisely the extent of the obligation he had conferred, but this I know, that the day succeeding his daughter's interview with the minister M. des Rosières received a safe conduct, and a short time afterwards a free pardon, with a good place as commandant of a town in Alsace. There his daughter established herself with him in the winter of 1801. She married there, and now inhabits her château of Reisberg, some leagues from Colmar. One remarkable circumstance was, that the valet de chambre was discharged. For what reason?

This adventure may give occasion to many observations. I have inserted it here, first, because, in point of time, this is its proper place; and secondly, because I shall have frequent occasion to speak of the principal actor in this little scene; and I am not sorry to have a point of comparison to offer. Fouché, again, is one of those great figures in our political drama who is supposed to be

well represented by the painting of a single trait. But what different shades, what diverse attitudes must be studied to complete the portrait! I knew him well; for finding myself often brought into contact with him, I have watched him with a minute attention, which I believe would not have suited him had he been aware of it; but the result is, that my observations upon him are numerous and important.

Fouché has been much spoken of; and certainly much may be said of him. The epochs of his life, which are preserved in the *Moniteur* and in all the biographies, are frequently recalled. I shall speak of him, not differently, but with more development. I shall show him often acting in concert with one of the first actors on our great theatre; and some actions of both may be illustrated by the light which I shall throw upon them. These same actions formed in great measure the net of government[1] in which Napoleon enveloped us. He was too skilful not to be aware of the consequences; but organising upon ruins and with ruins, in order to arrive at his object, which was a strong and compact government with a free and rapid circulation, it was necessary to employ the instruments which he found in the workshop of which he had taken possession; but Napoleon was a giant, and all in his hands struck with the force of a club; it was therefore the more essential that he should himself watch over their employment and direction. Among those who surrounded him on his return from Egypt, and on the 18th Brumaire, there are but few that I shall place in my historical picture to be judged by their loyally patriotic labours; Carnot, Thibaudeau, Dejean, Boissy-d'Anglas, Berlier, and some others, and the catalogue is full.

Meanwhile the year 1800 was drawing to a close, and every month, every week, brought news of fresh victories gained by Moreau, who in a few days acquired an immortality if he had known how to preserve it. He forced Austria, still trembling with the shame of Marengo, to come to confession at Luneville. Of all the insults and

[1] *Le reseau gouvernant*, a favourite phrase of Napoleon.

humiliations we had suffered under the campaigns of Schérer, and the victories of Suwarroff, we were now about to be revenged! Every evening General Junot brought news which made my heart and that of Albert beat. It was curious to observe the different impressions made upon different individuals; but this justice I must render to all, that never, either by word or gesture, was the smallest regret expressed on occasion of a victory obtained by our troops; and I may say that at this epoch the first names of France were happy and proud to march under the shadow of our laurels, though some of them, while triumphing in the glory of their country, were not the less faithful to their original allegiance. I shall not make exceptions; France has always been rich in similar examples; I shall only name the Duke de Mouchy, M. de Montcalm, the Prince de Chalais, MM. de l'Aigle, M. Archambaud de Perigord, as persons belonging to my mother's society, and because the recollection of association with persons upright and constant in their opinions is pleasing to the mind.

Junot, who was not prodigal in his esteem and attachment, accorded both to the persons I have named, and when he met them at my mother's house he was not prevented by their presence from reading his news; he was sure that the good fortune of France would be welcome to them. It was not so with the Marquis d'Hau——t; he was by disposition contradictory and quarrelsome; and though he possessed talents, his constant unreasonable disputations rendered him unendurable as a companion.

One evening Junot (it was before he had offered me his hand) had been dining with Carnot, then minister of war, and having learned news which he presumed would be agreeable to us, came to my mother's with proofs of some of the morrow's journals, and private letters which he had himself received. One of these, from Berthier, whom the First Consul had sent into Spain, contained some very interesting details. Madame Visconti, who had dined with us, had learned this, and was very impatient to see the letter. Before he read it, Junot was remarking

upon the smiling and happy aspect of affairs, while only a few months previous France had been a scene of mourning. He described Italy restored to our authority, Russia desiring our alliance, England renouncing the title of King of France, to facilitate her negotiations with the consular government, Austria beaten at all points, and——

"Hold there!" interrupted M. d'Hau——t rudely, "that is no cause for boasting. General Moreau has done that."

Junot was so much astonished, not only at the interruption, but at the manner of it, that at first he turned towards M. d'Hau——t, and fixed his eyes upon him without speaking, but soon after observed with a marked emphasis:

"I thought, till this moment, that General Moreau was a Breton; and I thought further, that since the marriage of Anne of Brittany with two of our kings, Brittany was become a province of France; and from all this I came to the conclusion that General Moreau was a Frenchman."

"Oh! let us leave these querulous discussions, my dear friend," said Madame Visconti in a wheedling tone, "for I am longing to hear Berthier's letter."—"You are right," said Junot, and he read to us the following, which he drew from his pocket:

"St. Ildefonso, 28 Fructidor, year IX.

"You will have learnt by the journals, my dear Junot, that I reached Madrid on the evening of the 2nd September. Duroc will also have communicated to you the letter which I wrote to him, and in which I described the fatigue I had undergone from the heat and the dust, particularly in the neighbourhood of Madrid. Imagine yourself at Tentoura or at Cesarea,—the same misery. In all respects I find great resemblance between the two countries; only that Egypt has the advantage.

"On arriving at Madrid, I found that the whole town had deferred their bedtime to come and meet me; the street of Alcala was illuminated with large torches of wax, which had a very good effect. The crowd was so great that my carriage could not proceed. On reaching the hotel appointed for my residence, I alighted from my carriage

to the sound of military music, really very fine. Alquier had ordered me an excellent supper, of which, I assure you, that I did not fail to profit; and I slept as if I were but twenty years old. Tell this to some one of my acquaintance.

"I have therefore slept equally well on mattresses of white satin as on an iron bedstead. The morning after my arrival I quitted Madrid to join the King and Queen of Spain here. In traversing Madrid I was so warmly applauded, for that is the only suitable word, that the tears started to my eyes; I thought at once of my much-beloved general, to whom these applauses were addressed. But all this was nothing compared to the reception I met with from their Catholic Majesties. The king embraced me, and the queen, who is very handsome, gave me her hand to kiss, and then embraced me also. But that which passes all belief is the excessive, attachment which their Majesties express for the Republic, and especially for our much-beloved Consul.[1] His reputation has crossed the Pyrenees, and is come to make friends for him in the heart of Spain. All goes well. I hope to terminate the commission with which I am charged as I have usually done, and merit his approbation. The Queen of Spain has spoken much to me of a certain person of my acquaintance, whose reputation for beauty, like the renown of the First Consul, has stepped over the boundaries of France. Ah, my dear Junot! how do I long to be again amongst you all! I do not like Spain. Try if the First Consul cannot be induced to replace me by Duroc or Bourrienne. Why I name the latter, I cannot rightly say. Adieu, my dear Junot! You ask me for details; I hope those I have sent you are sufficiently interesting. How I long to be in the midst of you! I beg you to tell the Signora *Pepita* (that is what I shall call her here) that I have not forgotten her commission; she might be well assured of that; I wrote to her by the last courier I sent; but I am always happy to repeat that

[1] This is not the only letter which Junot received from Berthier in which his attachment to the First Consul is similarly testified.

I am her slave, and perhaps she will more readily believe it when the lips of a friend repeat it for me. Read her, then, this part of my letter. *Cara, cara Pepita.* You see that I improve.

"Adieu, my dear Junot; adieu, my dear friend. Pray tell the First Consul that you know I am ill, and that he should not leave me long here. I know that my mission is but temporary, but I tremble to think of the possibility of only remaining here three months. They write to me from Paris that I am spoken of for the war ministry.[1] I know nothing of it.

"Adieu, my friend.

"Salutation and friendship,

"ALEXANDER BERTHIER."

I ought to notice, before proceeding further, two things of small importance, but which are connected with this letter. The first is, that it was some time afterwards that I became acquainted with the whole of it. General Junot did not think it necessary to read to us Berthier's expressions of love, thrown into the midst of a serious epistle, otherwise filled with matters of importance to the country, and which gave him the attitude of a true Cassandra. There was something absurd in this ambassador of a great nation, forty-five years of age, soliciting a young man of twenty-seven to associate with him in a falsehood to procure his return a few weeks sooner to the side of his mistress; and Junot would not allow M. de Hau——t the gratification of remarking upon it. The second thing was explained with much less difficulty. He told us that Berthier had never in his life been able to learn a single word of a foreign language. "And to such an extent was this eccentricity carried," said Junot, "that in Egypt it was not possible to make him say the word Para. He learnt it, but as soon as it became necessary to place it in a phrase, it was gone. Being once at Milan, and in immediate want of a tailor, he ordered his servant to fetch him one. The valet, not understanding a single

[1] He was already named to it.

word of Italian, represented to his master that he should lose himself in the town, and that it was necessary to wait for the servant of the house. Berthier was impatient and very peremptory, particularly when in immediate want of anything he ordered. "You are a blockhead," said he to the valet; "order the mistress of the house to come up." He brought up the landlady, leading her by the sleeve, for she did not, or would not understand, a word of French.

"Madame," said Berthier, stammering, as he always did when he intended to make an impression, which did not help him at all,—"Madame, I wish for a tailor." The landlady looked at him without answering. "Madame," said Berthier, raising his voice to its highest pitch, that she might understand him the better; "I want a tailor!" The woman looked at him in silence, but smiled and shook her head in token of not understanding.

"Parbleu!" said Berthier; "this is rather too much! what, you do not know what a tailor is?" Then, taking the skirt of his own coat and that of his servant, he shook first one and then the other, crying still louder and louder, "A tailor! I say, a tailor!"

The lady, who smiled at first, now began to laugh; and after a while, beginning to think that her lodger was mad, called out to her servants as loud as she could, saying, "*Ma è matto questo benedetto generale! per il casso di san Pasquale è matto.*"

Two waiters ran up at the furious noise made by Berthier, their mistress, and the valet; and they only increased the confusion. "I went just at this moment," continued Junot, who related this story, "to visit Berthier, and from the foot of the staircase heard a noise sufficient to stun one; I could not understand what should cause such a tumult in his apartment, and I hurried upstairs, thinking a friendly fist might be useful. I found him with a face as red as fire, and eyes starting from their sockets, marching up and down the room, vehemently exclaiming: "A tailor, a tailor! It is to provoke me that they will not fetch one; they can hear very well." To make himself better understood he had taken off his

coat, and was shaking it like a madman. When I went in, he threw it upon the ground, and advancing to the landlady, took her by the arms and pulled her before him, saying, "Stand there! old sibyl;" then shaking his two hands, which were by no means handsome, he said to her: "What! you do not know what a tailor is?" then imitating with his short thick fingers the action of a pair of scissors, he cried out in a tone of despair, "A tailor, I say; *tailleur! tailleur! taillum! taillarum!*"

The sight of Junot overjoyed him. An explanation ensued, and when Berthier heard the word *sartore*, which he ought to have used, "Pardieu!" said he, putting on his coat, and wiping his forehead; "it was well worth the trouble of making me cry out like that! I asked them for a tailor. Well! *tailleur*, *sartore;* it means the same thing after all; and besides, I showed them my coat."[1]

[1] At this time Milan was far from being what it has since become, and there was nothing remarkable in finding an inn where no one could speak French.

CHAPTER XLII.

Madame Bernard's daily bouquet—Junot accused of being a conspirator—His inexplicable absence—Lucien Bonaparte and the Abbé Rose—A new Opera—Discussions upon it—Les Horaces—Mysterious entreaties of Junot to dissuade us from going to the Opera—Half-confidence of Junot to my brother—Evening at the Opera—Enthusiasm caused by the presence of Bonaparte—The First Consul, my mother, and the opera-glass—Lainez, Laforet, and Mademoiselle Maillaret—Junot frequently called away; his mind engaged—The Adjutant Laborde—The gaiety of Junot, and the composure of the First Consul—The conspiracy of Ceracchi and Aréna—Quitting the Opera; the First Consul saved—The brothers Aréna—Nocturnal conversation at my mother's.

THE preparations for my marriage were in active progress during the month of October. Junot looked in upon us every morning, and then came to dinner, having his coach or his cabriolet always filled with drawings, songs, and a heap of trifles from the *Magazine of Sykes*, or the Petit Dunkerque, for my mother and me; and never forgetting the bouquet, which, from the day of our engagement to that of our marriage he never once failed to present me. It was Madame Bernard, the famous *bouquetière* to the Opera, who arranged these nosegays with such admirable art; she has had successors, it is true, but the honour of first introducing them is all her own.

One day Junot appeared uneasy, agitated, having been called away from the dining-table. It was then Madame de Contades, seeing him very silent, said jestingly, "General, you are as serious as a conspirator!" Junot coloured. "Oh!" she continued, "I know that you have nothing to do with conspiracies, or at least that yours would only be directed against us poor emigrants,

returned and ruined as we are; and really you would have more than fair play!"

"I believe," said I, "there is little danger in conspiracies; it is rare that their motives are perfectly pure, and the interest of the country, always the pretence, is generally the last thing intended; and therefore it happens that almost all great conspiracies are discovered before they take effect. The real danger to the chief of a state arises from a fanatic such as Jacques Clement; an insane ascetic, such as Ravaillac or Jean Chatel; or a hand conducted by desperation, like that of Charlotte Corday; those are the blows which cannot be warded off. What barrier can be opposed to them? What guards can prevent my reaching the most powerful throne upon earth to hurl its master to the grave, if I am willing to give blood for blood, life for life."

Every one exclaimed against me. "Come," said my mother, "away with these Grecian and Roman notions." I kissed her hand and smiled; a glance towards General Junot had found his eyes fixed upon me with an expression so singular, that an idea crossed my mind that he would not be very solicitous for a union with so resolute a woman, who seemed willing to play with poniards as with her fan. The thought seemed even to myself burlesque, because it was far from the truth, and at that period of my life I was one of the greatest poltroons of my sex. I was seated at the foot of my mother's sofa, and leaning towards her, whispered to her in Italian the thought which had just struck me. My mother laughed as well as myself, and we both looked towards General Junot, supposing that he would understand us, and approach to partake of our gaiety. He came indeed, but instead of replying to our jests, he fixed on me a look of anxious expression, and taking my hand and my mother's pressed them both. While leaning over us he said to me, "Promise me not to speak again upon this subject; say you will not?"—"Undoubtedly, I will not; but why?"—"I will tell you by and by; at least I hope so," he added, with a singular smile. Lucien Bonaparte,

who came in at that moment, would know to what our conference related; for the other interlocutors continued the discussion, and the conspiracies were still as much alive as if we had been in the prætorian halls. "Bah!" said Lucien; "these subjects of conversation are not suited for women, and I wonder at these gentlemen have suffered them to proceed so long. It would be much better to talk of the Opera I am to give you the day after to-morrow."

Albert, M. Hippolyte de Rastignac, and the Abbé Rose, arrived at this moment from the general rehearsal. One was much pleased with the Opera, another did not like it at all. Albert and the Abbé, both good authorities, differed totally in opinion; music and the opera underwent a long and critical discussion; Lucien and Junot meanwhile betaking themselves to private conversation. I remarked that they never raised their voices, and that the subject which occupied them seemed to be serious and important. The expression of their countenances made me uncomfortable, though I knew of nothing actually alarming. Everything appeared sombre and mysterious around us. It was evident that great uneasiness agitated the persons who were attached to the First Consul. I dared not ask a question. Lucien looked upon me as a child; and nothing could induce me to interrogate General Junot. Joseph, who was goodness itself, was the only person to whom I could have summoned courage to speak upon such a subject; but he was about to set out for Luneville, and we scarcely saw him again.

On the 11th of October Junot came early in the morning, which was not usual. He was still more serious than the day of the conversation upon conspiracies. We were to go this evening to the first representation of *Les Horaces* of Porta and Guillard. Guillard was the intimate friend of Brunetière, who interested himself much in its success, and had begged as a favour that we would attend it. This party was then arranged, and I confess much to my satisfaction. My mother was better, and I looked

forward to the evening as a great treat. It was then with no very pleasant emotion that I heard Junot ask my mother not to go to the Opera. His reasons for making this request were the most singular. The weather was bad, the music was bad, the poem was good for nothing; in fine, the best thing we could do was to stay at home. My mother, who had prepared her toilet for all the magnificence of a first representation, and who would not have missed it had it been necessary to pass through a tempest, and listen to the dullest of poems, would not attend to any of Junot's objections; and I was delighted, for I placed full confidence in the Abbé Rose, who said that the music was charming. The general, however, still insisted; so much obstinacy at length made an impression upon my mother, who, taking the general's arm, said to him anxiously, "Junot, why this perseverance?—is there any danger?—why are you afraid?"

"No, no," exclaimed Junot. "I am afraid of nothing but the ennui you will experience, and the effect of the bad weather. Go to the Opera. But," continued he, "if you decide upon going, permit me to beg you not to occupy the box you have hired, but to accept of mine for the night."

"I have already told you, my dear general, that it is impossible. It would be contrary to all established customs, and I am particular in supporting them. Would you have my daughter, your betrothed bride, but not yet your wife, appear in a box which all Paris knows to be yours? But for what reason am I to give up mine?"—"Because it is at the side, which is a bad situation for the Opera; and it is, besides, so near to the orchestra, that Mademoiselle Laurette's delicate ear will be so offended, she will not, for the next fortnight, be able to perform herself."

"Come, come," said my mother, "there is not common sense in all this. We will go and hear this second Cimarosa, who, no doubt, will not equal his prototype; but at all times a first representation is a fine thing. Do you

dine with us?"—"I cannot," answered the general, "I cannot even come to offer you my arm, but I shall certainly have the honour of seeing you at the Opera."

On quitting my mother, the general went up to Albert's apartment, and found him in his study, surrounded by those peaceful labours which so usefully divided his time. He earnestly recommended him not to lose sight of my mother and myself throughout the evening. "I have endeavoured," said he, "to persuade your mother not to go out this evening, and especially against going to the Opera, but without any effect. There may be trouble there, though there is no actual danger to fear; but I confess I should be better pleased if persons in whom I am interested were at home, rather than at the Opera. Your prudence, my dear Albert, guarantees your silence; you understand my situation;" and he left him, promising an explanation of what he had just said the next morning, if not that very night.

My brother came down to my mother, and the thoughtfulness of his air struck us immediately. "Ah!" said my mother, "what means all this? Junot would prevent our going to the Opera; and here is another preparing to accompany us there as if he were going to a funeral. It is worth while, certainly, to lay plans for gaiety if they are to be executed in such solemnity." My brother could not help laughing at this petulant sally, and this restored my mother's good-humour. We dined earlier than usual, and took our seats at the Opera at eight o'clock.

The boxes were already filled. The ladies were all elegantly dressed. The First Consul had not yet taken his place. His box was on the first tier to the left, between the columns which separate the centre from the side boxes. My mother remarked that the eyes of all persons in the pit, and nearly of all the boxes, were directed towards it. "And," said Albert, "observe also the expression of affection in the audience."

"Bah!" said my mother; "though I am near-sighted, I can see very well that it is but curiosity. We are always the same people. Lately, at that fête of the

Champ-de-Mars, when the Abbé Sieyes (she never used any other denomination) wore feathers like the canopy of the holy sacrament under which he formerly carried the Host, did not every one, and myself amongst the first, strain our necks to obtain a better sight of him? And the chief of the *band of sharpers*, was not he also the point of attraction for all eyes in the day of his power? Well, this man is now master in his turn, and he is gazed at as the others have been before him."

My brother persisted in saying that the First Consul was loved, and that the others had only been feared. I was quite of his opinion, and my mother only replied by shrugging her shoulders. At this moment the door of the First Consul's box opened, and he appeared with Duroc, Colonel Savary, and, I think, Colonel Lemarrois. Scarcely was he perceived, when, from all parts of the theatre, arose simultaneously plaudits so unanimous that they appeared to constitute but one and the same sound. The stage was thought of no more; all heads were turned towards General Bonaparte, and a stifled hurrah accompanied the clapping of hands and stamping of feet. He saluted the audience with much smiling grace; and it is well known that the least smile enlivened his natural stern countenance, and imparted a striking charm to it. The applauses continuing, he inclined his head two or three times without rising, but still smiling. My mother observed him through her glass, and did not lose one of his movements. It was the first time she had seen him since the great events of Brumaire, and he so entirely occupied her attention that Gèneral Junot came into the box without her perceiving him. "Well! do you find him changed since you saw him last?" said he.

My mother turned hastily round, and was as much embarrassed as a young girl who should be asked why she looked out of the window when the person who most interested her was passing. We all laughed, and she joined us. Meanwhile, the orchestra had recommenced its harmonious clamour, giving the diapason to Laforet and Lainez, who both screamed in emulation who should be

best, or rather who should be worst; and Mademoiselle Maillaret chimed in with lungs worthy a Roman lady of ancient times, making us regret that Madame Chevallier no longer occupied the scene. My mother, whose Italian ear could not support such discord, often turned towards General Junot to speak of the enchanting songs of Italy, so soft and so sweet. At one of these moments the general slightly touched her arm, and made her a sign to look to the First Consul's box. General Bonaparte had his glass directed towards us, and as soon as he perceived that my mother saw him he made two or three inclinations in the form of a salutation: my mother returned the attention by one movement of her head, which was probably not very profound, for the First Consul, as will be shortly seen, complained to my mother herself of her coldness towards him this night. Junot would also have reproached her at the instant had not one of the officers of the garrison of Paris tapped at the door of the box to request him to come out. It was an adjutant named Laborde, the most cunning and crafty of men. I shall sometimes have occasion to speak of him, and his portrait may take its place very well amongst those whom we cannot do without. His figure and his manner were at this moment indescribable. Albert, who now saw him for the first time, wished for a pencil to make a sketch of him.

General Junot was absent but a few moments. When he returned to the box, his countenance, which all day had been serious and even melancholy, had resumed in a moment its gaiety and openness, relieved of all the clouds which had veiled it. He leaned towards my mother, and said, very low, not to be heard in the next box: "Look at the First Consul; remark him well."—"Why would you have me fix my eyes on him?" said my mother; "it would be ridiculous."—"No, no, it is quite natural. Look at him with your glass; then I will ask the same favour from Mademoiselle Laurette." I took the opera-glass from my brother, and looked at him in my turn. "Well," said the general, "what do you observe?"—"Truly," I

replied, "I have seen an admirable countenance; for I can conceive nothing superior to the strength in repose, and greatness in quiescence, which it indicates."—"You find its expression, then, calm and tranquil?"—"Perfectly. But why do you ask that question?" said I, much astonished at the tone of emotion with which the general had put this question.

He had not time to answer. One of his aides-de-camp came to the little window of the box to call him. This time he was absent longer; and on his return wore an air of joy; his eyes were directed towards the box of the First Consul with an expression which I could not understand. The First Consul was buttoning the gray coat which he wore over the uniform of the Guard, and was preparing to leave the box. As soon as this was perceived, the acclamations were renewed as vehemently as on his entrance. At this moment Junot, no longer able to conquer his emotion, leaned upon the back of my chair and burst into tears. "Calm yourself," said I, leaning towards him to conceal him from my mother, who would certainly have exercised her wit upon the subject, —"Calm yourself, I entreat you. How can a sentiment altogether joyful produce such an effect upon you?"

"Ah!" replied Junot, quite low, but with an expression I shall never forget; "he has narrowly escaped death! the assassins are at this moment arrested."

I was about to exclaim, but Junot silenced me. "Say nothing; you will be overheard. Let us hasten out," said he. He was so much agitated that he gave me my mother's shawl, and her mine; then, taking my arm, made me hastily descend the staircase which led to a private door opening upon the Rue de Louvois, reserved for the authorities and the diplomatic body. My mother, conducted by my brother, rejoined us at the glass door, and jestingly asked the general if he meant to carry me off. Junot, though cheerful, still had his mind too much fixed on important subjects to reply to her raillery; my thoughts were wholly engaged by the few words he had said in the box, and the silence and haste imposed upon me,

alarmed and seriously affected me. Junot observed my paleness, and fearing that I should be taken ill ran into the street, though it rained in torrents, without listening to my mother, to find our carriages and servants. He met with his own first; my mother did not perceive it till she was already on the step, but immediately made an effort to withdraw. Junot, reminding her of the rain and her health, almost compelled her to get in; then whispering to me, "All is right; for heaven's sake compose yourself, and say nothing!" called to his coachman, "Rue' St. Croix;" then taking Albert's arm, they went together to seek my mother's carriage, in which they followed, or rather preceded us; for we found them at home on our arrival.

My mother was throughout her life a sort of worshipper of etiquette, and of the usages which should form the code of elegance and good-breeding. If she ever failed in them herself, it was from an excessive vivacity which she could not always command; not from ignorance of what was correct, or any intention of neglecting it. Notwithstanding her acute and amiable disposition, she affixed an extreme importance to these trifles; more so than can be conceived, without taking into consideration the education she had received, and the seal of indelible prejudice which the circumstances of the times had impressed upon them. And if I may be allowed to say so without being accused of speaking too partially of a mother whom I adored, I would add, that the requisitions she imposed on those who surrounded her of attention to trifles, which in our days would perhaps be called puerilities, only increased her claims upon our respect and affection.

No sooner were we alone and in the carriage than she began to dilate upon the dissatisfaction Junot had caused her.

What is the use of these parties of pleasure, and in gala costume too? Who would ever have believed that I should give my arm to an officer in uniform to leave the Opera? It is too ridiculous. I will tell him not to go to the Opera again in uniform. He will understand the pro-

priety of it; he has sense, and a good and correct taste. And then to leave us hanging upon Albert's two arms, making him resemble a pitcher with two handles! Who ever saw a man of fashion give his arm to two women at once? It is very well for Sykes's first clerk to gallant the wife and daughter of his master to the theatre in that manner. But a more serious fault which I have to reproach him with is putting me into his carriage. It is to be hoped no one of distinction was near: did you observe whether any of our acquaintance were in the corridor?" I had seen several persons whom I knew just before I got into the carriage, but I should have been very unwilling to increase her displeasure by telling her so; I had not time, however, to answer before we stopped at our own door, and Albert and Junot, already arrived, received us there. Junot led my mother to her apartment, placed her on her sofa, surrounded her by those thousand-and-one little things which are necessary to the comfort of an invalid; then seating himself upon a stool at her feet, and taking her hands in his, assumed a tone suitable to the important event he was about to relate. He informed her that Ceracchi and Aréna, the one actuated by republican fanaticism, the other by vengeance, had taken measures to assassinate Bonaparte. As General Junot proceeded in his account his voice became stronger, his language more emphatic; every word was a thought, and every thought came from his heart. In painting Bonaparte such as he saw him daily—such, in fact, as he was at that time—his masculine and sonorous voice assumed a tone of sweetness; it was melody; but when he proceeded to speak of those men who, to satisfy their vengeance or their senseless wishes, would assassinate him who was at that moment charged with the futurity of France, his voice failed, broken by sobs, and leaning his head upon my mother's pillow he wept like a child; then, as if ashamed of his weakness, he went to seat himself in the most obscure corner of the room.

My mother's heart was formed to understand such a heart as Junot's; and, open as she was to all the tender

emotions, she was violently agitated by the state in which she saw him. In her turn she burst into tears. "How you love him!" said she.

"How I love him!" answered he, firmly joining his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven; "Yes, I love him! Judge," continued he, rising and promenading the room as he spoke,—"judge what I suffered a few days ago, when your daughter, with an eloquence foreign to her sex and age, convinced us that all barriers, all precautions, would fall before the poniard of an assassin, provided he were but willing to sacrifice his own life. But what more particularly hurt me was to hear her represent this same assassin as becoming great by his crime."

My mother looked at me with a countenance of dissatisfaction. Albert, who was sitting near the fire, said nothing; but I was sure he did not blame me.

"All that," said my mother, "comes of Laurette's speaking upon subjects which are not in the province of women. I have often told her how much that habit impaired her talents of pleasing; but she pays no attention to what I say on the subject. In my time we only knew that the month of May was the month of roses, and our ignorance did not make us the less agreeable. For my scientific education, I never read any book but Telemachus, and yet, I believe, I can converse without being tiresome. I hope, my dear child, that you will correct that error."

"Ah! I hope not!" answered General Junot. "You have misunderstood me: it was not what Mademoiselle Laurette said which gave me pain; but I immediately considered that you were acquainted with Aréna, that he often visited here; that you also knew Ceracchi; that these men might have heard your daughter speak in the same strain; and that the soul and the head of the latter especially was capable of replying to the appeal which he might fancy to be thus made to him through the lips of a young girl, and might in consequence develop a few moments sooner his diabolical intentions. All this is very ridiculous, very senseless, is it not?" continued the general, seeing my brother smile at the last words, "but

I cannot help it ; for the last week I have not in fact been master of my own thoughts. You may judge if they were likely to be calmed by the First Consul's résolution of going to the Opera this evening to expose himself to the poniards of assassins ! We have yet only taken Ceracchi, Aréna, and, I believe, Demerville.[1] They are just taken ; but they were not the only conspirators. It is pretended that England and the English committee are concerned ; always the English. There are in this affair only two motives : one is the hatred of the family and of Corsica, the other a fanaticism of liberty carried to madness. This is what should alarm the friends of the First Consul. The most active police has no power in such a case, and no means of prevention."—"And what," said my mother "does Fouché say to all this ?"

The general made no answer, but his forehead became wrinkled and his brows contracted ; he crossed his arms on his breast, and continued his walk some time in silence ; then said, "Do not speak of that man."

His expression, even in silence, was of such a nature that it stupefied us all. I have since learned the cause of this sentiment, which broke through all Junot's efforts to restrain it ; and I felt what he must have suffered under such a conviction.

"No ; do not speak to me of that man, particularly to-day. I have had a scene with him this morning ! If he had a heart—but he knew better. If he had but red blood in his veins, we should have cut each other's throats like brave men,—like men, at least. What nonsense to come and tell me that this affair of Ceracchi was but child's play—to me, who for twelve days past have followed him step by step, while he——— But he is in the right," he continued, with a bitter smile ; "he told me, and I believe it is true, that he should know as much about it in an hour. I am almost sure of the treason of———"

Albert, who had risen, approached Junot and whispered to him. The general made an inclination of his head, and

[1] A man of the name of Diana was an accomplice, and arrested the same evening.

pressed my brother's hand; they again exchanged a few words, and he resumed:

"And what do you think he said upon this resolution of the First Consul to go to the Opera? He blamed him as I did; but what was the motive? 'Because,' says he, 'it is an ambush!' You suppose, no doubt, that this deprecated ambush was for the First Consul? No such thing; it was for these honest rascals, whose necks I would wring as willingly as a sparrow's,[1] and with no more scruple, after what I have learned of them, and the honourable function which I find them exercising. He made me an oration, which I believe was taken from his collection of homilies, by which he proposed to prove that the affair might be prevented going to this length. As I had already had a very warm discussion upon the same subject with a personage whom the First Consul will know some day what he really is (and the time is happily not far distant), and as I knew that this personage and Fouché had been emulating each other in their interference in this affair, I was desirous that my way of thinking should be equally known to both of them. I therefore obliged Fouché to explain himself clearly, and to tell me that it was wrong to lead on these men to the moment of executing their design, since it could be prevented. That was his opinion.

"'And thus,' said I, 'you would replace in society two men who have evidently conspired against the chief of the State, and that not to force him to resign his authority, not to remove him from it, but to murder him for the satisfaction of their own passions. Do you believe that Ceracchi would be content to die if, in sacrificing himself, he could kill the First Consul; putting him to death to glut an inordinate passion, in obedience to a species of monomania? do you believe that this madman will be cured by a simple admonition, or by an act of generosity?

[1] I here make the general speak (as I do all those whose words I have frequent occasion to report) in the language he used in familiar intercourse, when sufficiently excited to neglect chastening his conversation, or when he omitted to speak in a more pure style; which, however, he could do as well as many others, if not better, when so disposed.

No; he must kill the man, whom he looks upon as a tyrant, and whom he will never be induced to see in any other light. Or do you believe that Aréna, during so many years the enemy of General Bonaparte, will abjure his hatred against the First Consul because the latter has taken up the character of Augustus? No! It is his death they desire. Listen to the expression of Ceracchi in buying a poniard: "*I should like better a good knife that does not shut; and the blade solid and sure, and not fail in the hand!*" To leave a determined assassin like this to his bloodthirsty contrivances, what is it but to ensure to-morrow the full execution of the project you have averted to-day? This is not my first knowledge of the Arénas. The First Consul, who is thoroughly good-hearted, is willing to forget the evil they have always been forward to do him. But I have not so forgiving a soul. I remember his arrest in the South.[1] I have heard the particulars of the 18th of Brumaire,[2] and am completely acquainted with all the circumstances of the present affair.[3] Certainly I trembled to see the First Consul go to face death, which, notwithstanding all our cares, he might encounter; but, on the other hand, I saw but this means of cutting through the net they had cast around him. His existence would be rendered miserable, supposing it were preserved. There would be daily new conspiracies; a hydra constantly reviving.' When Fouché," continued Junot, "found that I saw through him, notwithstanding his cunning, he had recourse to the sentiments of

[1] When Bonaparte was arrested by command of Salicetti, the Adjutant-General Aréna, the Commissary Denniée, and the Commandant of Gendarmerie Vervain, were the persons entrusted with the execution of the order.

[2] It is Junot who speaks: he was convinced that the representative Aréna, elder brother of the conspirator (they must not be confounded), had attempted to assassinate General Bonaparte at Saint Cloud. I do not believe it; he hated Bonaparte, but would not have assassinated him.

[3] The plan of the conspirators was to stab the First Consul as he came out of his box, which, as I have before observed, was on the left between the columns. At this period the First Consul went in and out by the general entrance. The gallery and the staircase leading to the Rue de Louvois were always crowded with people to see him pass. The assassins were to strike as he stepped out of the box. Colonel Savary behaved nobly on this occasion; he would leave the box first, though he was not the person appointed to do so.

humanity. He! Fouché! He harangued me in the style of a homily; and all this with a head that one would suppose he had stolen from a skeleton. Oh! what a man! And the First Consul will place faith in his words! At length we shall see the conclusion of this affair, which he and another called child's play—reason in all things."

My mother listened attentively, and I remarked that during General Junot's long discourse, she and my brother often interchanged signs of acquiescence. When he had ceased speaking, she told him how just she considered his observations upon the Arénas to be. "They nourish hatred in their hearts," said she; "a hatred which may be dated long previously to the 18th of Brumaire, or to the events of Italy. I know not from what it arises, but I am sure that it exists. One thing that surprises me is, that Napoleon, Lucien, and Joseph, are the sole objects of this hatred; and I believe they return it, though, to say the truth, I have only conjectures respecting their sentiments, while I have proofs of the hatred of the Arénas towards them. With respect to Ceracchi, nothing you could say of him would surprise me. Permon, who knew him in Italy, introduced him to me at a ball at M. Delanoue's. Since then I have sometimes seen him at Madame Magimelli's, at Auteuil: I acknowledge that his exaggerated notions have made me tremble; yet his distaste of life and his profound melancholy rendered him interesting." Albert observed that his heart must have been profoundly wounded by the injuries which he imagined he had to reproach Bonaparte with. "For I have seen him," said he, "weep with enthusiasm in only speaking of him; and when he was required to model his bust, or rather when he himself requested permission to execute it, he was so much affected in delineating the traits of him whom he believed destined to regenerate the world, that I have heard it asserted by persons who knew the fact that he was compelled to abandon his task. This man had a soul of fire."

I had also seen this Ceracchi, and witnessed some of

his ebullitions of enthusiastic republicanism at Madame Magimelli's; and I confess he had not produced upon my mind the same disagreeable impressions that he had upon my mother. I pitied him warmly, for it was impossible not to perceive that his excessive sensibility must render him miserable.

The conversation now returned to the Arénas; my mother was much affected by this arrest. Her native country was always dear to her heart, and Aréna was a fellow-countryman. Junot put several questions to her respecting the conduct of the brothers for some years past at Paris. My mother communicated all that she knew on this subject, and it was but little; because, of all the Corsicans at Paris, the Arénas were those who visited her the least frequently. This conversation, however, brought to my mother's recollection a rather remarkable one which passed between her and Pépé Aréna on the 17th of Brumaire, the eve of the famous 18th. On that day we were visited by several Corsican representatives whom we had not seen for some time before, and among them Pépé Aréna. He came in the morning. His countenance was full of care, and she remarked it to him. He smiled, but his smile was forced. He spoke to her of Corsica, of my grandmother and my uncles; then suddenly inquired if she had seen Lucien lately. My mother answered that she saw him nearly every day, which was true; and, as she had much friendship for the young tribune of the people, she spoke of the high reputation he had already acquired as an orator: my brother-in-law, who, as we have seen, was his intimate friend, at that time frequently brought us the journals which reported the speeches (almost always extempore) which he pronounced in the Council of Five Hundred. Some of these improvisations contained admirable strokes of eloquence. "I do not always agree in opinion with him," said my mother; "but I do not therefore the less esteem his talents and his character."

"He is very young to wish to direct us," said Aréna, with an expression of some bitterness (Lucien was in fact

the youngest member of the Council of Five Hundred). "But it seems to me that your opinions are the same," replied my mother; "what, then, signifies the age of a man, provided he has ability? His brother has not waited to be forty years old to gain battles."—"Ah! ah! you are reconciled with General Bonaparte! He has been, then, to beg pardon; for, faith, he could do no less."—"We are not now discussing the subject of pardon or offences," said my mother, a little displeased. "I was speaking of Lucien and the glory of his brother."[1]

At the moment when Pépé was about to reply some one entered, and the conversation instantly ceased. Aréna soon after took up his hat to depart; my mother invited him to dine, which he declined, pleading an engagement in the country. My mother told him, laughing, that he was offended, which he denied; but she afterwards told us that from that moment she was convinced that Lucien, and whoever bore the name of Bonaparte, was held in great dislike by Aréna.

[1] One of the most curious effects of my mother's relations with Napoleon was that anything said against him in her presence always offended her. She only spoke of her own displeasure of him to her most intimate friends.

CHAPTER XLIII.

My mother's illness and long convalescence — My brother's treasures — Watching and supper—The bath, a betrayer—Scene of burglary by night —Terrible alarms—Conversation of the thieves—Frightful situation—Recital of this adventure to the First Consul—Bonaparte's singular question.

IN the first year of the consulate one of those adventures happened to me which sometimes influence the whole life of an individual, by making an entire change in the character of some of its attributes. The impression made upon my mind by the terrors of the night I am going to describe was so great that I lost for a time every vestige of courage; and if its effects have at length been sufficiently overcome to protect me from making myself ridiculous, I have rather to thank the efforts of my reason for the remedy than the simple operation of time.

My mother was recovering from a malady, as alarming as it was painful—an abscess of the head, caused by a severe blow against a marble mantelpiece. During the thirteen days in which the humour was forming, my poor mother's sufferings were distracting, and without a moment's respite. Fortunately it found a vent by the ear; for a long time afterwards the smallest unusual noise produced headaches so violent that they were at first attributed to tic-douloureux. Her convalescence was very tedious, and demanded the utmost care. The doctors particularly ordered that her sleep should be prolonged as much as possible, and that she should be kept perfectly quiet.

My brother was in the habit of spending the décadi in

the country, and not returning home till the following morning. In consequence of some business he was transacting for a friend, he had, on the night I am speaking of, the temporary custody of a large sum of money; and both these circumstances were known to a porter whom he had been long in the habit of employing in various commissions. This man had carried home for my brother a chest clamped with iron, and secured by a capital lock; its contents were valuable, and so heavy that the man was much fatigued by his exertion, and Albert offered him a glass of wine, saying, "Drink, my poor fellow, it will do you good, for you are terribly hot." The porter, shaking his head, observed, "Oh, I am accustomed to act the beast of burden; you could not have carried half as much." My brother, whose cheerful and sociable temper made him always ready with a jest, answered him, laughing, "But I have carried double, though." At first the man started and exclaimed, "It is impossible!" but presently added, "Oh, I understand!" and was about to depart, when he was ordered to fetch my brother's cabriolet for his excursion to Sainte Mandé.

When, however, the cabriolet was at the door, and the porter, who by his habits of employment in the family knew that Albert would not return till the next morning, was departed, the plan was changed and the carriage remanded in consequence of my mother's unwillingness to part with my brother. The day passed happily, and my mother went to bed at her usual hour, and in good spirits.

I remained by her side till she was perfectly asleep, and when convinced by the regularity of her respiration that she was both asleep and easy, I left her about midnight, and repaired to my own apartment, separated from that of my mother's only by a door, which I left ajar. I then took up a book, being unwilling to retire to my bed till quite satisfied that my mother's sleep would be calm. The silence of night now enveloped the city, only broken at intervals by the rapid passage of a carriage, or a distant murmur, which served to show that some few individuals were still awake; these sounds, however, were more and

more rarely heard, till at length the quiet in the street became as complete as that which reigned in my little apartment.

By a small timepiece on my little table I observed that it now wanted but a quarter to one. My mother had then been an hour asleep, and I concluded that I might safely lie down; but in preparing to do so I found myself hungry, and began to look round for my supper. The habit of sitting up a great part of the night had obliged me to supply the want of rest with an extra meal, and some fruit with bread or cake was generally left in my room for this purpose. Sometimes, however, this was forgotten both by the servants and myself, and on such occasions I seldom slept well. This night I looked in vain for my usual refreshment, but the key of the dining-room lay on my table.

It will be recollected that I have already described the form and disposition of our residence. The kitchen was on the basement, the offices of the domestic establishment on the ground floor, my mother's apartments and mine on the first floor, my brother's on the second, and the sleeping-rooms of the servants, not one of whom was lodged below us, all in the attic story. The rooms surrounded the staircase, and were connected by a gallery. On seeing the dining-room key, which was always deposited in my room when the apartments were closed for the night, I remembered that in the buffet I should find something to eat, and, accordingly, with as little noise as possible, fearing that I might wake my mother, I opened my own door and crossed the landing-place to that of the dining-room. There I found both strawberries and bread, and helping myself, I was about to sit down at the dining-table to eat them, but recollecting that my mother might awake and be alarmed if she called without receiving an answer I returned with my supper to my own room. Having bolted my door rather from habit than prudence, I sat down with a good appetite and perfect cheerfulness to enjoy some excellent strawberries and satisfy my hunger with bread.

I had long been mistress of the establishment, and one of the rules of good housekeeping which I had found the most difficulty in enforcing had always been the retirement of the servants for the night at the same time with ourselves. My commands were, that by twelve o'clock every one in the house should be in bed; but there were certain parties at dominoes and cards which sometimes kept them up till two o'clock in the morning, and I had threatened, and was determined, to punish the next infraction of my law in which I should detect them.

I had been about ten minutes at supper when the perfect quiet of the house was interrupted by a noise below stairs. My suspicions were immediately awakened, and the idea that my imperial will was again disobeyed put me much out of humour. While I was grumbling and eating, my suspicions were changed to conviction; the noise of footsteps, regular, light, and slow, as those of persons fearing to be heard, distinctly reached my ear. I was sure that some persons were coming up the first flight of stone stairs. Determined to take them in the fact, I very gently approached my room door that opened upon the stairs, and was slowly and carefully withdrawing the bolts, saying to myself, I shall not this time be told that you never sit up after midnight, it is now one by my timepiece; but wishing to make quite sure of my object, I held the second bolt in my hand to wait till the whole procession, shoes in hand as I supposed, should be in the act of passing the door. At this moment a noise, which I could compare to nothing but a stroke upon a great drum, saluted my ears, and made me start. It came from my mother's bath, which stood at one corner of the landing. Still more provoked by this noise, which I feared would wake my mother, I was about to throw open the door when I suddenly recollected that the servants who knew where the bath was would certainly not have suffered themselves to be betrayed by it. But if it be not they, who can it be? These reflections made my heart beat, and so shook my frame that I was obliged to lean against the door-post for support, while I instinctively replaced

the bolts I had so imprudently withdrawn. During this interval the persons were mounting the second staircase, which being of wood I could hear them much more distinctly than before, and was satisfied that their shoes were much stouter and more clumsy than those of any of our household. What was I to do? Should I wake my mother? The consequence would certainly be a frightful increase of her illness. I had not, it is true, any certainty that the nocturnal intruders were banditti, but at that time the most horrible assassinations were common, not only in the neighbourhood of the capital, but in Paris itself. These reflections passed through my mind much quicker than I can write them, but brought no counsel that promised relief from my painful state of apprehension. I listened long and anxiously for some further noise, but all was quiet; it was a false alarm, thought I, and was certainly the servants; I began to breathe more freely, and looked at my timepiece, thinking that an hour at least had passed while I was upon the watch; how much was I surprised to find that the hand had only advanced ten minutes! As all was quiet, I proposed to finish my supper and go to bed, but I trembled, and could scarcely swallow; however, I ate my strawberries, and had the last spoonful in my hand when a very distinct creaking and the repressed sounds of several footsteps proved that the persons I had before heard were now coming down the second staircase. The noise was not produced by an alarmed imagination, it was real; persons were coming downstairs with precaution, but certainly coming down; and I could no longer flatter myself that it was the servants. On reaching the landing-place between my door and that of the dining-room, two persons sat down on the steps of the staircase and began to converse in an undertone. Trembling from head to foot I, however, again approached the door, and, listening, heard a few broken sentences, from which I could comprehend that they believed Albert to be in the country; something, too, I heard of the impenetrable locks of La Dru, two of which fastened his door; and something of its being useless to

break into my mother's room. Beyond this I could only collect the broken words—late—daybreak—mother—nothing here—upstairs—the young one's door. Something was said in reply, and the answer, "Well, let us try!" accompanied by the sound of several pieces of iron, gently laid down upon the stone, completed my terror. I considered a moment whether I had not forgotten to shut the dining-room door, by which an entry would be offered to the whole suite of apartments. I looked round, and the sight of the key lying upon my table just afforded me presence of mind enough to determine how to act; it was manifest they were endeavouring to open that door, its resistance could not be long; to wake my mother was now indispensable, and I did so with all the precaution I was capable of. But I could not secure her against alarm; and I had no sooner pronounced the word "thieves," than with her usual precipitation she seized the three bell-pulls which were suspended by her bed, and pulled them altogether, screaming at the same time with all her strength.

"Oh, recollect Albert! You will be his death!" I exclaimed, convinced that the first sound of her bell would bring him out quite unprepared to meet the attack of assassins; but while I was making these reflections, and endeavouring to hush her screams, I heard the villains run off, and from the continued sound of hurried steps on the stairs felt convinced that some of them had been left to pursue their attempts upon my brother's strong locks, while the two had been consulting near my door upon their ulterior operations. The first sound of the bell had alarmed them, and they were now in hasty retreat. I ran to my window, which overlooked our court, and while I screamed loudly for help, to disturb the coachman and neighbours, saw the two last of the thieves jumping from our wall into the great timber-yard, then in the Rue Joubert, and which separated our house from that of M. de Caulaincourt.

Meanwhile my mother continued to ring and call, and the family were soon moving; my brother, on opening his

door, found a centre-bit introduced just below the first bolt, and some progress already made in working it; but the landing before my door was a perfect arsenal; there lay two more centre-bits, a crowbar, several iron hooks to serve for picklocks, and two or three keys. My brother put on his greatcoat, and went out to alarm the police; the gate of the timber-yard was found open, and a ladder against our wall; but no further trace of the robbers was discovered. It was morning when he returned; he found my mother better than could be expected, but distracted on my account. I had received a shock, the immediate effect of which was terrible, and threatened to be long-during.

I was seized with a fever, which brought on delirium; the impression of the thieves on the landing was always vividly before me, and the idea that they were murdering me, and that my poor mother would wake in the midst of assassins, covered with the blood of her child, was for a length of time never absent from my mind; they feared for my life, or at least for my reason. I was conducted from place to place, every effort to divert me was tried, and my own exertions assisting the affectionate attentions of those around me, my health improved; and though for a long time I was the greatest coward imaginable, and have always continued unreasonably timid, I am now able to rally my thoughts, and to exert some presence of mind, even in circumstances of actual danger.

"There, Sire," said I to the Emperor, on concluding this history (it was in the year 1806), "is the true cause of my cowardice which you were inquiring about. I am not now so foolish as to be unable, like a child of six years old, to remain for a moment in the dark, but my nervous system continues painfully affected by the consequences of this fright. Neither reason nor any effort of mind can remove the impression which the idea of what would have been the consequence had I remained in the dining-room to eat my strawberries has produced." And though six years had elapsed since that terrible night, the Emperor observed me turn pale, and said so.

"I assure your Majesty that the same impression has often happened to me after this event, when I have only had occasion to cross that fearful landing-place."—"It is strange," said the Emperor; and began to walk the room.

It was at St. Cloud, in the apartment of the Princess Borghèse one fine summer evening, that I related my tale; there is a person very remarkable in the present day who was at that time famous for stories of robbers and ghosts, which he told with great success. The apartments of the Princess were on the ground to the left on entering the great court of the palace. The Emperor, after continuing his walk some time, and when other recollections had superseded in my mind the history I had related, suddenly stopped opposite to me, and said, "Has not this adventure given you a great antipathy to strawberries?"

For a few seconds I made no answer, and then said, "No, Sire; I am, on the contrary, passionately fond of them."—"That is the nature of women," said he; "dangers attach them."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Lucien's republicanism, and a remarkable conversation with him after the conspiracy of Ceracchi—The explanation of Lucien's embassy to Spain—The Consul of the year VIII. and the Consul of the year IX.—Bonaparte's observation to Junot on the occasion of my marriage and the conspiracy—Junot's family—Signature of my contract of marriage—My brother's generosity, and the delicacy of his conduct towards me—M. Laquien de Bois-Cressy—Signature of my marriage contract by the First Consul, and singular recollections—Goodness of Bonaparte towards my brother—M. Duquesnoy, Junot's friend—Aggregated difficulties—Junot's repugnance to be married at church—My determination—Conversation between me and Junot—My brother's intervention, and my marriage at church agreed to by mutual concession—Junot's motives—Project of a nocturnal marriage—My *trousseau* and *corbeille*—Junot's present to my mother.

SOME days after the discovery of Aréna and Ceracchi's conspiracy, Lucien came to see us; he was thoughtful, and did not conceal that the repeated attempts upon his brother's life caused him serious uneasiness. This was the third in the course of one year: the first was on the road to Malmaison; the second in the Tuileries. "How," said he, "can such strokes be averted? Jacques Clement, Ravaillac, Damien, Jean Chatel,—all these men executed their projects, because, in forming them, they held their own lives for nothing. If Ceracchi had been alone, as was his original intention, my brother had been no more; but he thought, by taking associates, to make his success more certain: he deceived himself."—"But," observed my mother, "your reflections are alarming; for how then can your brother be protected?"—"He only can protect himself," replied Lucien. "He is the son of the Revolution; he must march in the principles it has consecrated;

above all things, he must forbear any attempt against the liberty of the citizens. His route is traced; he must follow it, or he is lost, and we are lost with him. It will not now answer to attempt fettering a people who feel their liberty and their strength; or we shall see the Lilliputian bonds broken by Gulliver."

Junot and my brother remarked to him that all the First Consul's actions announced plainly the principles of a good republican, and that no one could accuse him of departing from those principles;[1] and Junot proceeded with animation: "No pity is due to those who would propose to assassinate him upon pretence of defending an illusory liberty which the First Consul protects and consolidates. I do not dissemble my opinion in this respect."

"Nor do I," said Albert; "for such beings appear to me a hundred times more guilty than Ravaillac or Jacques Clement. A motive of religion and fanaticism formed the excuse of their parricide; while the men at present in question are actuated only by private and particular interests, all at least except Ceracchi, and he is mad."

"That may be the case with the conspirators in this last affair," said Lucien; "but do not imagine that France does not still contain great minds, the guardians of our liberties, always ready as an advanced guard in their defence. This breast," and he struck his, as he continued speaking in a voice of emotion, "contains a French and patriotic heart. My brother knows me; and Junot, and all who are about him, know that I never cease to recall to his mind, with all the energy of a French and free soul, the solemn engagements which he contracted with the nation on the 19th Brumaire, and of which I am the guarantee."

Then turning towards Junot, he added, "You remember the conversation you witnessed four days ago?

[1] The particular era, and especially the prepossessions of the speaker, must always be carefully noted. This is not the only time that I shall have occasion to represent Junot perfectly sincere in his persuasion that Napoleon was an honest republican.

Well, I shall always speak thus, and no fear will make me deviate from my path. If the men who surround my brother in the Government choose to assist him in measures oppressive to the country I shall not increase their number; and on the last day of the liberty of the Republic I shall go and seek another country."

This conversation proves that Lucien was bent on opposing Napoleon's plans for a centralisation of power. That which Junot had witnessed at Malmaison was the discussion of many regulations relating to the prefects which Lucien would not authorise, considering them too arbitrary. To resist Napoleon was to ensure his revenge. Lucien was indeed his brother, but the determination of his character was in all things predominant; and this conversation, together with Lucien's perseverance in reminding his brother of his promise of the 19th of Brumaire, explained to me his embassy to Spain, which took place a few weeks afterwards. Already the Consul of the year IX. was compared with the Consul of the year VIII.; the General Bonaparte of Toulon and Italy, founding Republics, daughters of France, with the General Bonaparte seeking to concentrate all the powers of the State in his own person. Lucien might hear, in my mother's salon, reflections made with a smile, in an undertone, by persons who had not faith enough in republican vocations to believe that Bonaparte would support the system he announced on the 19th Brumaire. Many were even simple enough to speak of General Monk and of Charles II. Lucien heard all this and similar language from various quarters, and he wished to prevent, not the evil only, but the suspicion of it.

When tranquillity was restored by the arrest of the other conspirators (Topino-Lebrun, Demerville, etc.), the conclusion of my marriage was hastened. The First Consul had said to Junot, "Do you know that your marriage has been held by a very slender thread, my poor Junot? For I believe if these rascals had killed me, the alliance with you would have been little cared for." Bonaparte would not have uttered such a sentiment three

Lucien Bonaparte

PRINCE OF CANINO

Lucien Bonaparte

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or four years preceding. But on attaining absolute power he took up an idea, which was perhaps the cause of his ruin, but to which at least he always attached great importance, that men are governed and led by motives of interest or fear.

On the 27th of October all the family of Junot arrived at Paris, and were presented to my mother; and never till this day had I duly appreciated the virtues of his heart. Sensible of the wide difference which a Parisian education, and constant intercourse with the best society of Paris, made between our manners and those of his mother and sister, who knew nothing beyond the towns of Burgundy, he dreaded to perceive in me a contemptuous ridicule which would have rendered him miserable; and never shall I forget the expression of tenderness and respect with which he presented his mother to mine, and the action which seemed to entreat, though he never used the words, that I would be a daughter to his parents. He had no reason to fear. They were too good and too respectable not to demand and to secure my duty and love.

The next day the marriage contract was signed, and it was not till that moment that I learned that my brother, from his own means, endowed me with 60,000 francs, in satisfaction, as the marriage settlement expressed it, of my claims on the paternal inheritance. My claims! when we all knew that none of my father's property ever had been or ever would be realised; the greater part of it was in the English funds! but it would not have been agreeable to General Junot to receive my dower as a gift from my brother, and therefore this clause was introduced. Fifty thousand francs more were added by M. Lequien de Bois-Cressy, an old friend of my father, and who was to be my mother's second husband; he gave me his dower, as his future daughter-in-law, secured upon an estate in Brittany. He was rich and liberal; I was not, therefore, surprised at this present; but that my brother, who, from the proceeds of his own industry, had maintained my mother's house, and furnished my expensive education,

should now act so nobly, was even more than my gratitude could express; nor was this lessened by the affectionate terms in which he replied to my insufficient thanks: "Do not speak thus," said he, embracing me with that fraternal tenderness which he had always shown me; "do you not know that my mother and yourself are the sole objects of my affection and of my happiness? I live only for you. It is, then, quite natural that the produce of my labours should be employed for your benefit. A great, and an unhoped-for marriage is offered you; the money is my own, and how could I dispose of it better than in making your fortune some way answerable to the establishment you are about to form?"

A circumstance arising out of this will show the First Consul's prodigious memory, even in matters of the smallest importance to himself. The following day, the 29th of October, Junot, accompanied by my brother as my nearest relation, attended at the Tuileries for the signature of the marriage contract. The First Consul received my brother with great kindness; questioned him upon his prospects and his intentions; spoke of my mother with friendship, and of me with an interest which affected me much when Albert repeated the conversation. But for the singular part of the interview: he desired the contract to be read to him. When the 60,000 francs from my paternal inheritance were named he made a movement indicative of surprise, and another, though less marked, at the mention of the 50,000 francs of M. de Bois-Cressy, but made no remark upon either. When the lecture was completed, he took my brother by the arm, led him to the recess of a window, and said to him, "Permon, I remember that when your father died he left nothing. At that period I visited your mother daily; and you no doubt know," added he, with an air sufficiently embarrassed, "that at the same time I was desirous of marrying you to my sister, Madame Leclerc, and of arranging the future marriage of Mademoiselle Loulou with that *mauvais sujet*, my brother Jerome." (He did not speak of the principal marriage he planned at that period.) "Well, Madame

Permon then told me that her husband left nothing. What, then, does this mean?" Albert repeated to the First Consul what he had already said to me, entreating him not to mention it. Napoleon looked at him with an indefinable expression, and said, "You are a generous fellow, my dear Permon; you are a generous fellow; I shall take care of you. But you allow yourself to be forgotten. Why do you never come to the Tuileries? Your brother-in-law will now remind you of me, and will also remind me of you." Accordingly, a few days afterwards, Junot solicited for Albert a situation in which he might give proofs of his attachment to the cause of the 9th of November, and the First Consul appointed him to one of the three then existing posts of commissary-general of the police of France.

The day preceding my marriage, a circumstance at once trifling and serious had nearly caused its rupture. A friend of Junot's, M. Duquesnoy, was mayor of the 7th arrondissement: the general, as Commandant of Paris, not belonging more to one mayoralty than another, wished his marriage to be performed before M. Duquesnoy; and he inquired of my mother whether she supposed it would make any difference to me. My mother replied that she was herself perfectly willing, and did not believe that I should be otherwise, but that she would send for me to answer for myself. On General Junot's putting his request to me, I answered, that in this, as in everything else, my mother was mistress of my actions on so solemn a day. I only observed that the distance to the mayoralty of M. Duquesnoy in the Rue de Jouy, quartier Saint Antoine, was long, and that I should not fear fatiguing my mother if it were no farther off than our church of St. Louis, which, being at the extremity of the Rue Thiroux, was directly opposite our house. I did not at that moment remark General Junot's astonishment; but, having embraced my mother, left the room.

I was no sooner gone than the general asked my mother if I expected to be married at church.

"To be married at church!" she cried; "where, then,

would you have her expect to be married? Before your friend with the scarf, I suppose? But, my child, you have surely lost your wits. How could you entertain the idea that not my daughter only, but myself and her brother, could consent to a purely republican marriage? As for Laurette, I promise you she is capable of thanking you for your intentions if you should propose this to her." General Junot walked about much agitated. "Will you permit me to speak upon the subject to Mademoiselle Laurette in private? Situated as we now are, there can be no objection to my request."

My mother shrugged her shoulders. "You know not what you are talking of," said she; "until you become her husband, you are but a stranger, and what you wish to say is not likely to make her your friend: why do you want to make a secret of it? Why am I not to be present?"—"Because calmness is necessary in treating of such a matter; but I can speak to Mademoiselle Laurette here, with the door of your chamber open." I was called: nothing could exceed my astonishment, my grief I may say, in hearing this strange proposition. I did not conceal it: the general replied that, situated as he was, it was impossible he could be married at church, "to make a show of myself," added he; "for you could not prevent all the beggars and low people of the Chaussée d'Antin from surrounding the house, and even filling the church. And I am to appear in uniform amidst such a crowd!"

"I do not know," I answered, "what you should find disagreeable in being seen to perform an act which is the duty of every Christian (I am not speaking as a devotee), in entering upon the engagements which we propose to take upon ourselves to-morrow. The very Pagans sought the sanction of this act, the most important of their lives, in the temples of their gods. The Turks only are content with the Cadi, and I hope it is not from them you have taken arguments in support of your extraordinary proposition."—"I am much hurt by your obstinacy," said Junot; "how can you, with your sense, persist in a

formality which your education ought to have taught you to consider a nullity?"

"I am very young, general, to discuss so serious a question. I understand nothing of the controversy, except that I was born in the Christian religion, and that this religion imposes duties upon me to which I am at least as much bound as the adorers of Dagon were to theirs. I can only say that, very certainly, I shall not stir a step from this house if it be not to go where my duty calls me. Be assured, general, that notwithstanding the advanced state of the preparations our marriage will not take place unless the church shall bless it."

I stood up to go away. The general took my hand, and saw that my eyes were full of tears. He stamped his foot with violence, and let slip a very unusual expression. "Junot! Junot!" cried my mother from her chamber, where she heard all that passed,—"Junot! is that proper language to use?"

"You afflict me greatly," said the general. "It distresses me to give you pain; but, after all, this is a mere childish whim on your part, which you persist in because you have been told to do so; while to me it is a matter of serious consequence. Do you know that it is nothing less than a confession of faith?"—"And suppose it is?" said I; "what was the religion of your fathers? You have been baptised, you have been confirmed, you have received your first communion, you have confessed: here, then, are four sacraments of which you have partaken, and when that of marriage comes in its course, suddenly you turn renegade, apostate, perhaps! No, no, general, it must not be."

Having said this I went to my mother's room, where I found my brother. Junot followed me, and addressing himself to Albert, submitted to him the question which caused this debate; he was in despair; what I insisted upon was of no importance whatever, he said, and would seriously compromise him. "Well!" said I, standing up, "I can say no more upon the subject of which I ought never to have permitted the discussion. I only regret

that General Junot should for a moment have believed that my principles would suffer me to accede to the proposition he has this morning made."

I retired to my chamber, and was just then informed that Mademoiselle L'Olive and Mademoiselle de Beuvry were in the salon, and that they had brought in two coaches the articles which composed my *trousseau* and *corbeille*;[1] the two baskets which were to contain them followed on a truck,—that of the trousseau, in particular, was so large that no coach could contain it.

I sent to request my brother's presence, and he came to me immediately. "My dear Albert," said I to him, "this affair will become serious if the intervention of your friendship and excellent sense does not prevent it. Not that I request your advice, because my resolution is irrevocably taken, and if General Junot is equally determined a rupture is inevitable; to you, therefore, I refer to render it as little as possible painful to our poor mother. The blow will be terrible to her."

Albert took my two hands in his and embraced me tenderly, wiping away my tears, which flowed abundantly. He walked up and down the room in silent meditation, then stopped some time before the window; my maid, Josephine, came to require my attendance in my mother's room. "I cannot go," said I to Albert; and I begged him to go to my mother, whose apartment was only separated from mine by a very small drawing-room, which had no door towards my chamber. He went, and I had scarcely been ten minutes alone when my mother's room door opened, and she came to me. "My child," she said, "here is one who does not ask your pardon, which, nevertheless, I hope you will grant."

Those who were well acquainted with General Junot know how much the expression of his countenance varied when he was particularly agitated. At this moment

[1] We have no words directly synonymous to these; both signify the bridal paraphernalia. The "trousseau" is that part of it which is furnished by the bride's family. The "corbeille" is the bridegroom's present. The several articles composing each will be best illustrated in the text.—*Translator's Note.*

he was scarcely recognisable; he advanced behind my mother, leaning on Albert's arm, changing colour so rapidly that he appeared to be ill. "Your brother," said he, "has been showing me how much I have distressed you; he will now explain to you that I am not so much to blame as you may suppose; and if you will take into consideration the character of a soldier full of honour and frankness, but who could not entertain the same ideas with you upon the subject we have been discussing, you will be indulgent and pardon me."

My brother then affectionately taking my hand, and holding his other hand to Junot, said to me, "Our friend has been explaining to me that being the Commandant of Paris, and invested with the confidence of the First Consul, he objects to appearing in open day on an occasion so solemn as his marriage, to perform in a church a sacred act of religion, because, on account of his political position, it would make him a sort of spectacle to the whole town. You know me, my sister; you know that my heart is devoted to you and to honour. Well, after what he has said, I have engaged to persuade you to comply with his wishes. The general does not desire to wound any of your religious convictions; he acknowledges that you are right in requiring the religious ceremony, but he requests that it may take place at night. I believe that this mutual concession will remove all obstacles on both sides." I looked at my mother, and receiving a sign of approbation from her had nothing further to object except my dislike to a nocturnal ceremony. It recalled those days of terror when the bridal pair received by stealth the benediction which the priest accorded at the risk of his life. It was necessary, however, to be reasonable; and I consented, as my mother and brother approved it, that the ceremony should take place in the manner proposed.

I afterwards learned that this sudden opposition was caused by the First Consul. This may appear extraordinary to those who remember that two years afterwards he signed the Concordat; but all fruits do not ripen in one season. He had just escaped from the dagger of a man

who accused him of attempting to overturn the institutions of republicanism, and he was not willing that the Commandant of Paris, known to possess his entire confidence, should perform a public act which might point to a new system of action on the part of his patron. He therefore particularly required of Junot that he should only go to church at night, upon the supposition that the family insist upon the religious ceremony. Junot, in his zeal to obey, exceeded his instructions. His religious notions—having passed his youth in an army where none such existed—were not those of incredulity, but of perfect indifference, and he had no suspicion of the effect his proposition would have upon me; in the first instance, then, he did not even speak of a nocturnal marriage, which in fact supplied all the conditions absolutely required by either party.

"At length, then," said my mother, when she had heard me pronounce my consent, "this grand affair is settled;" and turning to Junot, she added, "it has been all your fault. Who would ever have thought of coming on the eve of marriage to say, I will have nothing to do with the church? Come, fall on your knees, and beg pardon of your betrothed. Right. Now give him your hand, or rather your cheek, in recompense of that graceful act of submission. It is the last; to-morrow he will be your master. But, what now, is it not all settled?" The fact was that this nocturnal ceremony, which did not please me at all, had moreover the inconvenience that it would be unaccompanied by a wedding mass; I whispered this new objection to the general, and it was presently removed by the promise that it should take place at twelve o'clock, the hour of midnight mass. My mother laughed on overhearing this discussion. "And now that we are all at length agreed," said she, "do me the favour, Monsieur, my son-in-law, to take your leave for the present; I must show the young lady her *trousseau*, and hear her opinion of my taste; we shall afterwards both sit in judgment upon yours." On entering the salon, though it was large, I found myself much in the situation of

Noah's dove, without a place of rest for my foot. From an immense basket, or rather portmanteau, of rose-coloured gros de Naples, embroidered with black chenille, made in the shape of a sarcophagus bearing my cipher, an innumerable quantity of small packets, tied with pink or blue favours, strewed the room; these contained full-trimmed chemises with embroidered sleeves, pocket-handkerchiefs, petticoats, morning-gowns, dressing-gowns of Indian muslin, night-dresses, nightcaps, morning-caps of all colours and all forms;—the whole of these articles were embroidered, and trimmed with Mechlin lace or English point. Another portmanteau of equal size, of green silk embroidered in orange chenille, contained my numerous dresses, all worthy in fashion and taste to vie with the habiliments already described. This was an hour of magic for a girl of sixteen. Time passes away; mature years have already arrived; old age will follow; but never can the remembrance of this moment of my mother as she now appeared be effaced from my mind. How eagerly did she watch my eyes; and when the peculiar elegance and good taste of any article of her own choice elicited my admiring exclamations, how did her fine black eyes sparkle, and her smiling rosy lips display the pearls they enclosed! Who can describe a mother's joy on such an occasion, or the effect it produces on the heart of an affectionate daughter! Taking my head between her two hands, and kissing my eyes, my ears, my cheeks, my hair, she threw herself on a settee, saying, "Come now, *mathia mou*,[1] seek something else that will please you."

The *trousseau* being fully examined, the *corbeille*[2] next demanded inspection.

At this time the custom of giving a basket or case for the articles of the *corbeille* was not yet exploded; fifty or sixty louis were spent upon a species of basket covered with

[1] Greek words, meaning *light of my eyes*; a most caressing expression, which my mother habitually used towards me.

[2] It was Mademoiselle L'Olive, dressmaker to Madame Bonaparte, who had been instructed by Madame Murat to complete most of the objects of the "Corbeille," jointly with Junot.

rich silk or velvet, and highly ornamented, which stood for six or twelve months on the dressing-table of the bride, till, becoming tarnished and worn, it was no longer ornamental and was consigned to the lumber-room, to be eaten by the rats in spite of its finery. Now they do things with more sense, and lay out the money upon a valuable chest of longer duration. Mine, then, was an immensely large vase, covered with green and white velvet, richly embroidered with gold. Its foot was of gilded bronze; its cover of embroidered velvet, surmounted by a pine-apple of black velvet, transfixed by an arrow, from which were suspended on each side a crown, the one of olives, the other of laurel, both cut in bronzed gold.

This *corbeille* contained Cashmere shawls, veils of English point, gown trimmings of blond and Brussels point, dresses of white blond and black lace; pieces of Indian muslin and of Turkish velvet which the general had brought from Egypt; ball dresses for a bride; my presentation dress, and Indian muslin dresses embroidered in silver lama. Besides all these there were flowers bought of Madame Roux;[1] ribands of all sizes and colours; bags (or as we now say, reticules), they were then all the fashion, one of them of English point; gloves, fans, and essences. At each side of the *corbeille* was a sultan, or scented bags. The first contained all the implements of the toilet in gold enamelled black; the apparatus of the work-table—thimble, scissors, needle-case, bodkin, etc., all in gold set with fine pearls. The other sultan contained the jewel casket, and an opera-glass of mother-of-pearl and gold set with two rows of diamonds. The casket contained settings for an entire suite of ornaments without the stones; six ears of golden corn and a comb (which, on account of the immense quantity of my hair, was as large as those which are now worn), set with diamonds and pearls; a square medallion set with large pearls, containing a portrait of General Junot by Isabey, for the resemblance of which the artist's name will vouch, but of a size more fit to be affixed to the wall of a gallery than to be suspended from the neck; but this

[1] Madame Roux of Lyons; she lived in the Rue Sainte Anne.

was the fashion of the day, and Madame Murat had one of her husband, also painted by Isabey, and larger than mine. The casket contained also a number of superb topazes brought from Egypt, of an incredible size, Oriental corals of extraordinary thickness, which I have since had engraved in relief at Florence by M. Hamelin, and several antique cameos; all these were unset. The bridal purse of gold links, connected together by delicate little stars of green enamel, the clasp also enamelled green, contained too weighty a sum of money had it not consisted of bank-notes,[1] except about fifty louis in pretty little sequins of Venice.

All these elegant presents had been completed under the direction of Madame Murat, and did infinite honour to her taste. At this time such a *corbeille* was a treasure of great rarity; for the first time since the Revolution it had reappeared at the marriage of Mademoiselle de Doudeauville with M. Pierre de Rastignac. Madame Murat's marriage followed after a considerable interval, and her *corbeille* was very rich; but as mine took place nearly a year later, not only was the *corbeille* more beautiful, but it was composed with more conformity to ancient customs, and in a more refined taste. After this time the *corbeille* and *trousseau* again became common, but were copies, not models, like those of Madame Murat's and mine.

But of all these beautiful gifts, nothing delighted me so much as Junot's affecting attention to my mother. She longed for a Cashmere shawl, but would never purchase one, because she said she could not afford one so good as she wished for; and I had determined that my wedding gift to her should be a red one, because that was the colour she preferred, but I had never whispered my intentions. However, together with my *corbeille* came a small basket covered with white gros de Naples, embroidered in silks with my mother's cipher on the draperies, from which the first thing that presented itself was a superb scarlet Cashmere shawl. The basket contained besides a

[1] The Bank of France was established in the month of February 1800; I think it opened the following month. The two purses were made by Foncier, a very celebrated jeweller at that period.

purse like mine, except that the enamel was a deep blue, and within it, instead of money, was a topaz of a perfect oval round, the size of a small apricot; gloves, ribands, and two magnificent fans. I cannot describe how sensibly I felt this amiable attention. When I thanked the general for it with an effusion of heart which I rather repressed than exaggerated, he replied, "I foresaw what you now express; and if I had not loved her who is about to become my mother with filial tenderness, I should have done what I have for the pleasure I enjoy at this moment."

CHAPTER XLV.

My opinion upon the peculiar province of Memoirs—Anne of Austria's robe, and Mademoiselle's shoes—My wedding-day—Sister Rosalie and my confessor—Refusal to marry me at night—Scruples—The Vendean abbé—The clergy and the republican party—L'Abbé Lusthier patronised by Junot, and appointed Grand Vicar to the Bishop of Orleans—The curate of the Capuchins engaged—Wedding toilet—Family assembled—Junot's aides-de-camp, his witnesses—The Dames de la Halle and their bouquet—The municipality and the church.

As the Commentaries of Cæsar, the military Memoirs of Marshal Villars, the Reveries of Marshal Saxe, etc., relate solely to military affairs—sieges, battles, etc.—so, I think, should contemporary Memoirs render a faithful account of those incidents which are passing immediately around the author at the period of which he is treating, for the benefit of those who come after him. Every object should take its proper form and colouring, and that colouring should arouse in the mind of the reader a vivid impression of the event and its attendant circumstances; not the ball only should be described, but the ball-dress. To be exact in such matters is not to be scrupulously minute, but a duty; for if the author be not expected to paint like Tacitus the vices of governments, corrupt, despotic, or declining, his pencil should trace the general outline of all that he has seen. In this picture the daily scenes of the drawing-room should especially have their place; to speak of them is to portray them. To dress the personages in the coat or the gown they wore on the occasion under review, if one be fortunate enough to remember it, is to lay on those fresh and lively colours which give to the whole the charm of reality. This appears to me to

be the grand attraction of the Memoirs of Madame de Motteville, de Mademoiselle! They are almost always badly written, frequently guilty of the grossest faults of style, yet what truth in their descriptions! We become acquainted with the individuals we read of; and when Madame de Motteville speaks of the cambric sheets of Queen Anne, and the violet robe embroidered with pearls which she wore on the day when she sat in council for the registering the edicts of toleration; and when Mademoiselle describes the form of her own shoes on the day when, according to the expression of M. de Luxembourg, she established the fortune of a cadet of good family,—I imagine myself in the Parliament of 1649 with the Queen, M. de Beaufort, M. the Coadjutor, and all the great men of the Fronde; or I fancy myself in the orangery of Versailles with Mademoiselle, in her white satin robe trimmed with carnation ribands and tassels of rubies. The writer of memoirs must give life to the scenes he represents; and that excess of detail which would destroy any other work can alone produce the desired effect in this. Therefore it is that I have given a catalogue of my *corbeille* and *trousseau*. We should rejoice in these days to find in Philip de Comines a description of a *corbeille* of the time of Louis XI., or Philip the Good; happily, he gives us better things.

On the 30th of October, at nine in the morning, everything was in motion in our small house of the Rue de Saint Croix, and earlier still in the hotel of the Rue de Verneuil. At daybreak I had left home, accompanied by Sister Rosalie (who on hearing of my approaching marriage had quitted her retreat to be with me), to go to my confessor: this ought to have been done on the eve of my wedding. Having made my confession, I requested the venerable abbé, my spiritual father, to perform the religious ceremony of my marriage in the church of the Capuchins[1] at a quarter past twelve at night; and great was my astonishment at receiving a dry and peremptory refusal.

"What reason," said he emphatically, "can General

[1] Now the Church of Saint Louis, in the Rue de Saint Croix.

Junot possibly have for refusing to make you his wife in the face of the sun? What does he fear? Ridicule! No! he has too much good sense for that. There must be some cause of objection unknown to us." I turned pale; but the abbé, in spite of all Sister Rosalie's entreaties, proceeded: "Who shall satisfy me, who am the priest required to bless this marriage, that he is not already the husband of another?"

"Monsieur l'Abbé! Monsieur l'Abbé!" said Rosalie in a voice of lively reproach, at which I should not have conceived the good girl capable towards any ecclesiastic,—"Monsieur l'Abbé, for Heaven's sake forbear! what are you doing?"—"My duty!" replied he in a stern voice; "I perform that duty which nature and the laws impose upon the guardians of this young girl, and which they seem to have cast upon Providence. I then, as the minister of God, of that same Providence, am bound to watch over the interest of the fatherless orphan."

"Monsieur l'Abbé," said I, rising to go, "my gratitude to you is the same as if your charitable friendship had saved me from a great danger; but it is my duty to remind you that whatever danger may threaten me, I have a support, a protector, a father; and that M. de Permon, my brother, who unites all those titles, enlightened at once by his tenderness for me and his acute penetration, is capable of judging whether I am deceived by a man whose reputation for honour and loyalty stands so high. I have already explained to you, sir, the reason why he wishes to receive the nuptial benediction at night."

"The reason is injurious to you," said the abbé, with increasing anger. "Why should the Commandant of Paris fear to show himself in uniform in one of the churches which his general has just reopened? He would not manifest the same repugnance to exhibit himself to-morrow in the Temple of Victory, now called Sulpice, instead of Saint Sulpice." (This was, in fact, the denomination now given to Saint Sulpice, and a fête was at this very time announced to be held in the Temple

of Victory (Sulpice) in commemoration of our ancestors.) "Young lady," continued the good man, "do not assume that air of displeasure; it is neither becoming your situation nor mine. Rather thank me for the solicitude I feel for my spiritual child, for such you are, my daughter; and it grieves me to think that you may be deceived. Why should your civil marriage take place in the Faubourg Saint Antoine? Why are the banns not published at the church? Why is a nocturnal celebration demanded? The ceremony before the mayor will take place by day; but where? at the extremity of Paris! in an obscure quarter, where, truly, a former Madame Junot is not very likely to suspect that a successor is being installed in her rights; all this has an ambiguous appearance, and I shall not make myself a party to its execution."

It was equally vain to reason or petition; the abbé turned a deaf ear to all I could say, and I was obliged to depart without the consolation of knowing that the good father would sanction my marriage with his presence; his blessing he gave me, and prayed that his presentiments might prove unfounded.

I pressed upon him at my departure a purse containing a handsome sum of money, which my brother had given me for that purpose; I knew that the abbé was very poor, and almost destitute of necessaries; I saw in the garret where he lived neither fire nor wood, and the weather was already becoming cold; he resisted, however, the offer repeatedly, and even with discontent. I would not listen to the refusal, but left the purse, saying that what he could spare from his own comforts he might distribute as my almoner.

The Abbé Lusthier was one of those characters which the continual agitation of our time does not produce; then, in his party, as in ours, there were men of sincerity, who were ready even to sacrifice their lives in the cause to which, from principle or prejudice, they were attached. La Vendée had its martyrs to loyalty, as we had our martyrs to that holy and noble liberty so often condemned to death, but which cannot perish because it

is immortal. At this time political good faith was to be found in all ranks; with truth may it be said that this has passed away. This poor man, who had been a soldier, and was now a priest, had testified his loyalty to the throne and altar by his personal as well as pecuniary sufferings; he had obtained a dispensation for officiating in his sacred functions, notwithstanding the severe mutilation of his left hand. He lodged at this time in the house of a cartwright in the Rue Pépinière, and was frequently obliged to change his residence to avoid observation; because, though not absolutely denounced, he was compromised in the confessions of the Chouans. He was perhaps a fanatic, but he was sincere. He lay upon ashes, and lived upon roots; he prayed for the happiness of France; but he would have France happy in his own sense of the word. He was, however, a man of sense, and certainly in speaking to me of his apprehensions respecting General Junot he only expressed what he felt. He was really alarmed, for he saw in Junot only a man of *La Nouvelle France*—of our young France, valiant and glorious, which has taken its degrees in characters of blood, the blood of its sons. He could not comprehend that devotedness to the soil of the country by which those sons had illustrated their names. He only saw a creation of tempests and storms in this young man, who at twenty-seven years of age had attained an elevated rank by means of glorious deeds and a valour attested by numerous scars.

Junot never heard of this little scene till it was related to him some years afterwards, with the greatest frankness, by the Abbé Lusthier himself, on occasion of his calling to request my husband to obtain for him the living of Virginie, a little village near Bièvre. "I hope your fears on my account are now at an end," said Junot, smiling, and offering his hand to him. "I assure you, you have no occasion to retain any; and to prove it I shall request Citizen Portalis to appoint you to a different benefice from the one you have solicited. I know from my wife that your fortune does not correspond either with your merit

or your charity, and it is my duty, if possible, to repair the injustice of fate; and I hope, at the same time," added he, laughing, "to prove that I am innocent; for I would not silence by an obligation any person who is entitled to reproach me."

The Abbé Lusthier not only accepted General Junot's offers, but attached himself unreservedly to him. He obtained for him an excellent living in the diocese of my uncle, the Bishop of Metz, and was some time afterwards appointed grand vicar to his friend the Abbé Bernier, Bishop of Orleans.

But to recur to the interesting period from which this episode has led me. On my return home I related all that had passed, which excited my mother's displeasure. "I hope," said she, "you did not leave him the purse." I looked at her instead of answering. On meeting my eyes she laughed, half angrily and half in jest, and said, "So, I am a simpleton! And you did leave him the purse, did you not?"—"Certainly," I replied, embracing her. "And you know very well that each piece of silver which we have given the Abbé Lusthier will acquire the value of gold in his hands." Albert then went out to find the curate of the church of the Capuchins, gave him the necessary instructions, and received his promise to be ready at five minutes past midnight.

At nine o'clock in the morning my toilet was commenced in which I was to appear before the mayor. I wore an Indian muslin gown, with a train, high body and long sleeves that buttoned at the wrist, and which were then called *amadis;* the whole was trimmed with magnificent point lace. My cap, made by Mademoiselle Despaux, was of Brussels point, crowned with a wreath of orange flowers, from which descended to my feet a veil of fine English point, large enough to envelop my person. This costume, which was adopted by all young brides, differing only according to the degree of wealth of the parties, was in my opinion much more elegant than the present bridal fashion. I do not think that it is prejudice for the past which makes me prefer my own wedding-

dress—that profusion of rich lace, so fine and so delicate that it resembled a vapoury network, shading my countenance and playing with the curls of my hair ; those undulating folds of my robe, which fell round my person with the inimitable grace and supple ease of the superb tissues of India ; that long veil, which in part covered the form without concealing it—to the robe of tulle of our modern brides, made in the fashion of a ball-dress, the shoulders and bosom uncovered, and the petticoat short enough to permit every one to judge not only of the delicacy of the little foot, but of the shape of the ankle and leg,[1] while the head, dressed as for a ball, scarcely covered by a veil of stiff and massy tulle, the folds of which fall without ease or grace around the lengthened waist and shortened petticoat of the young bride ; no, this is not elegance.

At eleven o'clock the general arrived, with the rest of his family. His mother had preceded him by half an hour, and during that short time had acquired rights on my filial tenderness and respect which to her death she shared with my mother, and which I still feel for her memory. This excellent woman had seen me but twice; but she had made a correct estimate of the mutual tenderness which subsisted between my mother and myself. Her perfect goodness of heart and excellent judgment had inspired the thought of placing herself between us at the moment of a separation, which she foresaw would be so painful. Alas! she knew at that moment better than I did what were my poor mother's feelings ; and I was far from understanding the full force of the words which, with tears that could not be restrained, she addressed to her, "I will supply your place to her!"

[1] Prince Talleyrand began life by saying what are called "witty things." Being one day present at the Tuileries, when several ladies were to take an oath of fidelity between the hands of the Emperor on their new appointments, he particularly noticed the beautiful Madame de Marmier, who wore remarkably short petticoats in order to show the delicacy of her feet and ankle. Some one present asked Talleyrand what he thought of the *tout ensemble*. "I think," said the witty minister, "that her dress is too short to take an oath of fidelity."

The general brought with him his father, his brother, Madame Junot, his sister-in-law; Madame Maldan, his youngest sister; and two of his aides-de-camp, of whom General Lallemand, then a captain, has rendered his name celebrated by the honour and fidelity of his conduct. General Junot had him attached to his staff in Egypt, where he served in the fine regiment of chasseurs of the general-in-chief; Junot had a high esteem for him. The other officer was M. Bardin, son of an estimable painter, and himself a very worthy man. He had wit, wrote pretty verses with ease, drew admirably, and had on this occasion laid all his talents under contribution for his general's service. These two gentlemen were the general's witnesses; mine were the Count of Villemanzy, peer of France, an intimate friend of my father, and M. Lequien de Bois-Cressy; M. Brunetière, who had been my guardian, now acted as my father, together with Albert and my uncle, Prince Demetrius Comnenus, who had arrived two days previously from Munich.

When we set out for the Rue de Jouy, the Rue de Saint Croix near our house was filled with people, mostly strangers in our quarter; and among them nearly all the principal *Marchandes de la Halle.* Junot was extremely considerate for the people of Paris, and was very popular with them; and I am convinced that in a commotion the mere sight of him would have restored tranquillity; he was very benevolent to them, giving alms to a very great extent. He could, moreover, speak the language of the *Dames de la Halle* admirably, when any advantage was to be gained by it.

Four of the group requested permission to pay their compliments to me. It was granted, and they entered the salon carrying each a bouquet, certainly larger than myself, and composed of the finest and rarest flowers, the price of which was greatly enhanced by the lateness of the season. They offered them to me with no other phrase than the following: "Mam'selle, you are about to become the wife of our commandant, and we are glad of it, because you are said to be kind and good. Will you

permit us?" And the two women embraced me heartily. Junot ordered some refreshments to all those who had been good enough, he said, to remember him on the happiest day of his life. We set out for the municipality amidst their loud acclamations and the repeated cries of "Long live the Bride and Bridegroom!"

On arriving at the mayoralty of the Rue de Jouy Faubourg Saint Antoine, where it was Junot's whim to be married, not, as the Abbé Lusthier supposed, to be less in sight, for in this case he would have contrived his matters very ill, but to gratify a friend; we were received and married by M. Duquesnoy, mayor of this arrondissement. He spared us the ennui of a long discourse, and only addressed to us a few well chosen words, which I have never forgotten.

We returned to my mother's, and the day passed off much as all similar days do. When the hour of midnight struck we crossed over to the church, and at one by the clock of the Corps Législatif I entered the Hôtel de Montesquieu to the sound of the most harmonious music.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A grand dinner at my mother's the day after my marriage—Junot's friends and the rest of the party, a curious assemblage—Their characters and portraits —General Lannes, the Roland of the Army—Duroc—Bessières—Eugène Beauharnais—Rapp—Berthier—Marmont, the best friend of Junot—Lavalette—His marriage—The divorce—The negro and the Canoness—Madame Lavalette's beauty and the ravages of the smallpox—The Bonaparte family—Madame Bacciochi in the costume of a literary society of ladies.

JUNOT was much attached to his comrades; all who had been connected with him in the army of Italy or the army of Egypt had special claims upon his friendship, and he was desirous of giving a dinner the day after his marriage to eight or ten of his brethren in arms. My mother, who was always anxious to make him adopt what she called refined habits, vainly remonstrated that this would be a defiance of etiquette; that it would resemble a journeyman carpenter giving his companions a treat on his wedding holiday. Junot was firm, and my mother's only resource was to invite his friends herself.

"But will they come to me without an introduction?" she inquired. Junot assured her that they would, and invitations were sent to Bessières, Lannes, Eugène, Beauharnais, Rapp, and some others. Some of Junot's friends, Belliard, Desgenettes, etc., were not yet returned from Egypt; but those who were in Paris all met at my mother's table.

This dinner was extremely curious because it was a reunion of all parties. My mother's friends sat down beside the whole family of Bonaparte, and the new guests made a very interesting accession to the party. At this

time I knew none of the above-mentioned friends of Junot; I had distinguished their names amid the acclamations of the people, when news of some fresh triumphs arrived; but I was acquainted with no generals except Moreau, Macdonald, and Beurnonville, whom we had frequently met at Madame Leclerc's. It afforded me then great satisfaction to be introduced to those men who had seconded Bonaparte, and had been to him at once good comrades and good labourers in the erection of that edifice of glory under which France now found an asylum from her distractions.

General Lannes was also lately married. He had been more diligent than Junot, and had been for three weeks the husband of Mademoiselle Louise Gheneuc, a young person of exquisite beauty. Lannes was then twenty-eight years of age, five feet five or six inches high, slender and elegant, his feet, legs, and hands being remarkable for their symmetry. His face was not handsome, but it was expressive; and when his voice pronounced one of those military thoughts which had acquired for him the appellation of the Roland of the army, "His eyes," said Junot, "which now appear so small, become immense, and dart flashes of lightning." Junot also told me that he looked upon Lannes as, without exception, the bravest man of the army, because his courage, invariably the same, neither received accession nor suffered diminution from any of those incidents which usually influence military men. The same coolness with which he re-entered his tent he carried into the midst of the battle, the hottest fire, and the most difficult emergencies. To this invaluable advantage Junot considered him to possess the most rapid *coup-d'œil* and conception, and the most accurate judgment, of any person he had ever met with, except the First Consul. He was besides amiable, faithful in friendship, and a good patriot; he possessed a heart truly French—a heart of the best days of the glorious Republic. One curious trait in his character was the obstinacy with which he refused to have his hair cut short. In vain the First Consul begged, entreated him to cut it off; he still

retained a short and thick queue, full of powder and pomatum. This mania nearly embroiled him with Junot, notwithstanding their friendship, on account of the latter having cropped the hair of the famous division of Arras, and in consequence the fashion became general throughout the whole army.

Duroc was next to Lannes in Junot's estimation, and was a year younger than him; his person was about the same stature, but with a superiority of manner and figure; his hair was black; his nose, chin, and cheeks were too round to admit of his features being at all striking, which even cast a shade of indecision over his countenance; his eyes were large and black, but set so high in his head that they did not harmonise with his smile or any other expression, from which singular effect those who were not partial to him averred that he was not frank; but I, who was his intimate friend, who knew his heart perhaps better than any other person, can affirm that it was all openness and goodness. Our friendship, which commenced in 1801, and closed only with his life, was that of a brother and sister. Peculiar circumstances made me his confidante, at first against his will, but afterwards with his entire acquiescence, in a case which must influence the happiness of his life, and which turned out unfortunate. Numerous letters from him, which I still possess, written from all countries, certify that it was long ere he recovered his equanimity, and still longer before he could pardon those who, with one stroke, had given a mortal wound to his moral and political existence.

Bonaparte, who was a good judge of men, distinguished him from his companions, and sent him to execute difficult missions in foreign courts; this showed that he understood Duroc's capabilities. I have a letter of his, dated from St. Petersburg in 1802, in which he mentions the too flattering estimation he was there held in; the Emperor Alexander, when he visited me in 1814, spoke of many persons whom Napoleon had sent to him, and his opinion of Duroc was still the same as it had been described twelve years before. This is not the place to

allude to future events, but I cannot forbear remarking that I shall throughout have frequent occasion to prove that, far from being ungrateful towards Bonaparte, as M. de Bourrienne has inconsiderately advanced, Duroc was always amongst the most devoted of his adherents.

Bessières, at that time a colonel, was amongst Junot's intimate friends. I always deplored the cessation of this intimacy, for the most futile and ridiculous cause imaginable; and being frequently called upon to give judgment between them, I must confess that I could not always think Junot in the right. Bessières, who was about the same age, was a stouter man than Lannes; like him he was from the South, as the accent of both sufficiently testified; and like him he had a mania for powder, but with a striking difference in the cut of his hair—a small lock at each side projected like little dogs' ears, and his long and thin Prussian queue supplied the place of the *Cadogan* of Lannes. He had good teeth, a slight cast in the eye, but not to a disagreeable extent; and a rather prepossessing address. He was then colonel of the *Guides*—that is to say, of the *Chasseurs à cheval* of the consular guard—jointly with Eugène Beauharnais.

Eugène was yet but a child; but already gave promise of being, what he afterwards became, a most charming and amiable young man. With the exception of his teeth, which, like his mother's, were frightful, his person was perfectly attractive and elegant. Frankness and hilarity pervaded all his actions; he laughed like a child, but never in bad taste. He was good-natured, gracious, polite without being obsequious, and a mimic without being impertinent, which is a rare talent. He performed well in comedy, sang a good song, and danced like his father, who had derived a surname from his excellence in this art; in fine, he was a truly agreeable young man. He made a conquest of my mother, whom he wished to please, and completely succeeded. Beauharnais, the father, who was called the *beau danseur*, though well born, was not of a rank to ride in the king's carriages; and Josephine, his wife, was never presented. He alone was invited on

account of his dancing, and frequently had the honour of being the queen's partner.

Rapp was then what he continued to be twenty years later, with the exception of a few additional wounds. It is true he had in vain passed through all the forms of courts, French and foreign, but with manners the most rough, ungraceful, and awkward that ever belonged to a man of the world. But if in courts he never lost his rude uncultivated exterior, so also he preserved pure and intact a disinterested soul and virtuous heart. Rapp was always esteemed and loved, because he deserved to be so.

Berthier was one of Junot's friends with whom I had the greatest desire to become acquainted. I had seen him frequently at Madame Visconti's, but always in a hurry; and at this period the name of Berthier was so closely connected with that of Bonaparte, that in hearing him mentioned the memory called up Parmenio, at least. Berthier was small and ill-shaped, without being actually deformed; his head was too large for his body; his hair, neither light nor dark, was rather frizzed than curled; his forehead, eyes, nose, and chin, each in their proper place, were, however, by no means handsome in the aggregate. His hands, naturally ugly, became frightful by a habit of biting his nails; add to this, that he stammered much in speaking, and that if he did not make grimaces, the agitation of his features was so rapid as to occasion some amusement to those who did not take a direct interest in his dignity. So much for his person; he was the plainest of the three brothers; Cæsar was better looking than he, and Leopold still better than Cæsar. Madame d'Ogeranville, their sister, resembled Alexander Berthier. With respect to his mind, his heart, and that which we call understanding, I shall have occasion hereafter to notice the judgment I have formed of them; I must, however, add here that he was an excellent man, with a thousand good qualities, neutralised by weakness. But I deny that Berthier deserves the character his biographers have given him. He not only loved Napoleon, but he was much attached to several of his

brother officers; and often braved the ill-humour of the Emperor, in speaking to him of such of his friends as had committed faults. Berthier was good in every acceptation of the word.

"The best and dearest of my friends," said Junot, after having presented his comrades separately to me, "is still in Italy; Marmont will soon return with his wife, to whom I shall introduce you, and whose friendship I hope you will obtain, giving yours in return; he is a brother to me."

M. de Lavalette, another of my mother's guests on that day, was no bad representation of Bacchus: a lady might have been proud of his pretty little white hand and red well-turned nails; his two little eyes, and immoderately little nose, placed in the midst of a very fat pair of cheeks, gave to his countenance a truly comic expression, in aid of which came the extraordinary arrangement of his head; not the locks only, but the individual hairs might be counted, and they received distinguishing names from the wits of the staff—as the invincible, the redoubtable, the courageous; and one in particular, which defied the discipline of the comb or the hand, and pertinaciously stood upright, they called the indomitable.

But notwithstanding this personal appearance, and an address almost burlesque, Lavalette knew how to impose respect, and never suffered merriment to take unwarranted liberties with him. He had sense and wit; had seen much and retained much; and related multitudes of anecdotes with remarkable grace, resulting from a cast of ideas at once quiet, brilliant, and acute. M. de Lavalette was not, however, a superior man; the horrible and infamous prosecution of which he was the object has placed him on an eminence which he would never otherwise have attained; but he had the essential qualities of a good father, a good husband, and a faithful friend.

He married, a few days before his departure for Egypt, Mademoiselle Emilie de Beauharnais, daughter of the Marquis de Beauharnais, brother-in-law of Madame

Bonaparte. This young lady—of extreme beauty, gentle, and, thanks to Madame Bonaparte her aunt, very well educated—had considerable difficulty in marrying, on account of the position of her parents. Her father obtained a divorce from his wife that he might marry a German canoness; and her mother married at the same time a negro. The poor abandoned child was fortunate in having attracted the affections of such a man as Lavalette, which she warmly returned. Her husband, however, had not reached Egypt before the bride took the natural smallpox, and, scarcely escaping with her life, lost her beauty. She was in despair, and though by degrees the trace subsided, and the marks of the pustules became less evident; though her figure was still fine, her complexion dazzling, her teeth good, and her countenance pleasing, she could not reconcile herself to the change of which both before and after his return she felt conscious that her husband must be sensible. The delicacy of his conduct never gave her reason for a moment to suppose that his attachment was in any way diminished; but her sighs and tears, her profound melancholy, and weariness of life, showed that she could not overcome her own apprehensions; the good and excellent Lavalette had but one wish, and that was that his wife should be happy.

Lucien, Minister of the Interior, could not be at my wedding dinner, but Madame Murat, though about to lie in, made an effort to join us. Madame Leclerc was in the height of her beauty. Madame Bacciochi was dressed on the occasion with a degree of eccentricity which even now is fresh to my mind. She had presided in the morning over a female literary society; and proposing to establish a peculiar costume for the associates, she considered the readiest way to effect her purpose was to have a pattern made and appear in it herself, and in this new dress she afterwards came to my mother; such a medley of the Jewish, Roman, Middle Age, and modern Greek costumes—of everything, in short, except French good taste—was, I think, never seen. To see Madame

Bacciochi thus attired was not surprising, because we were accustomed to her singularities; but it was impossible to resist the ludicrous impression she created by declaring her intention of offering such a dress to the adoption of all good Christians.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The two parties brought together—Affected politeness, and concealed contempt—The visiting card—Rapp and M. de Caulaincourt—Tragi-comic scene—M. de Caulaincourt's tribulation—The duel prevented, and the reconciliation—General Lannes—Military manners—Powdered queues, and singular prepossession—Colonel Bessières and General Augereau.

A COMIC effect was produced by the unusual union of parties which took place on this occasion. On one side contempt was disguised under the appearance of extreme politeness, but combined with a hauteur which announced that this politeness was in deference to the mistress of the house; and an occasional smile or whispered observation betrayed the opinions of the *ancien noblesse* upon the manners of their new associates. Our good "little papa," M. de Caulaincourt, was perhaps the only person of this class who was sincerely gay, and paid his compliments with the frankness of a soldier, combined with the elegance of a courtier; but an incident occurred which for a time damped his cheerfulness.

He had known Rapp at the Tuileries, and it was not without surprise that he recognised him in our society. Approaching me, he asked, in an undertone, whether that great boy (pointing out Rapp) had paid his visit to my mother. I answered in the negative. "Then at least he has left his card?"—"No."—"But, my dear child, it is not possible; you must have been so absorbed in admiration of your *corbeille* as not to have seen him; it is not credible that a man should come and sit down in the house of a woman of good society, and eat at her table, without having first been introduced, and paid his

respects to her." As he was proceeding in a very animated tone, Rapp crept softly behind him, then hallooed into his ear: "What are you talking of, dear papa; please to move out of my way on a wedding day, you know the old must give way to the young;" and so saying, he threw his arms round the old gentleman's waist, lifted him gently from the ground, and set him down at a little distance.

M. de Caulaincourt's good-nature made him generally beloved; but under it was concealed a strength of character known only to those who were much in his society; and such a circumstance as the present was calculated to show him off as a high-bred French gentleman in the true acceptation of the word. Looking at Rapp with an expression of dignified severity, he said:

"Colonel! you and I are neither old enough nor young enough for such play;" then bowing coldly to him, he offered me his arm, saying, "Will you come and see what is passing in the next room?"

The worthy man was agitated. I led him through my mother's room, which was filled with company, and made him sit down in mine, which my mother had converted into a second boudoir. Junot was surprised soon after to find me consoling my old friend, to whom I was endeavouring to represent that the matter did not deserve the serious turn he was disposed to give it. I repeated the whole to Junot, who, in spite of the old gentleman's opposition—for M. de Caulaincourt would by no means permit that he should seek apologies for him—went to remonstrate with Rapp, and in five minutes brought him to us, ready to fall on his knees to entreat pardon for the brutalities which Junot had assured him he had committed. "And Junot tells me also," he added, turning to me, "that I have failed in respect to you, in acting so rudely in your presence. I might, however, fully refuse to beg pardon, because apologies are only necessary when one has done wrong intentionally, and certainly I did not intend to offend."

It was impossible to forbear laughing at this quaint

excuse, and M. de Caulaincourt, frankly holding out his hand, said to him, "You are a good fellow, and I shall be happy to become one of your friends." Rapp pressed the old gentleman's hand with a very pretty little hand of his own, not at all in consistence with his massive figure; and here ended an affair, from which my friend's high feelings of honour had threatened nothing less than a duel, except that my mother was so offended with Rapp that she scarce ever spoke politely to him afterwards.

M. de Caulaincourt, dining at our house some days afterwards, requested an introduction to Lannes, who, of all the republican generals, was the one who pleased him best. I passed my arm through his and led him to the other end of the salon, where Lannes was conversing with Junot. "General," said I, "permit me to present to you M. de Caulaincourt, an ancient and distinguished general officer, who wishes to be acquainted with you."

The pleasing countenance of Lannes was immediately illuminated with a cordial smile, and shaking him roughly by the arm, he said: "Ah, my old friend! I like the ancients; there is always something to be learnt from them. To what branch of the service did you belong? Were you biped or quadruped?—or, Ah! *Diable;* I believe you are at present attached to the Royal Phlegmatics."[1] The fact was that, astonished at Lannes's reception, and the rolling artillery which at that time made a copious part of his vocabulary, M. de Caulaincourt had been seized with a severe fit of coughing, which he could not stifle.

"Ah! what is the matter?" said the general, patting him upon the back as we do a choking child; "why, this is an infirmity that requires reform, Junot; you must make Lassalle enrol him." Lassalle then commanded the veterans of the garrison of Paris, but was no relation to the famous general of the same name. The good old gentleman scarcely knew whether to laugh or to be angry. Meanwhile Junot whispered a word to the general, who,

[1] The expression "*royal-pituite*" is much more ridiculous in French than it can possibly be rendered in our language.

suddenly changing his tone, said, with an expression almost respectful, "What, are you the father of those two brave young men, one of whom, notwithstanding his early age, is colonel of a regiment of carabineers? Then you must be brave yourself!—you have educated them for the country, and you have not, like too many of your class, sold them to foreigners. You must be a good man; I must embrace you." And so saying, he threw his arms round him, and embraced him heartily.

We left the two comrades to resume the conversation we had interrupted, and went to rejoin my mother in an adjoining salon. "What do you think of General Lannes?" said I.—"Oh! very well! very well. But I expected a different kind of man: for example, he swears like a renegado; it makes one tremble. To be sure, he may be a good soldier and a brave man for all that."—"And what more could you expect in General Lannes than a soldier distinguished by his valour and his skill in beating the enemy?"—"Why, my dear child, what could I think? It was the fashion of dressing his hair that deceived me. I thought that if a man knew how to dress himself he must have something of the manners of other times; how could I think otherwise?"

This naïve confession stupefied me. "Is it possible, then," said I, "that you have judged a man only by his queue? You were very fortunate in not having encountered General Augereau, in whom you would have found yourself much more mistaken." At this moment a great man passed us, and saluted me with that expression of respect which is found only in well-educated persons. "And who is that?" said M. de Caulaincourt; "he is powdered too, I think."—"It is Colonel Bessières; shall I introduce him to you, my little papa?"—"No, no," said he hastily; "I have had enough of introductions for once."

It was in vain I assured him that Bessières left his oaths in the barracks; he felt no inclination for the experiment; but when some time afterwards he met General Augereau he remembered my words, and had

full opportunity of proving their truth. The general surpassed even himself in swearing, and my poor friend, in relating the conversation he had had with General Fructidor, as he called him, could not find words to express the astonishment he felt at the language he had heard.

From this time he had such an apprehension of queues and powder that he was very near cutting off his own; but this temptation was temporary, as may be imagined. He contented himself with no longer trusting all the *Cadogans* he met.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

My presentation to the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte—The Court of the Tuileries, and the Empress's entrance—Duroc and Rapp on the steps—Eleven o'clock—Politeness of Eugène de Beauharnais—The yellow salon—Gracious reception by Madame Bonaparte—Amiability of Hortense—Conversation with the First Consul—Bonaparte's opinion of Mirabeau—The rogue and the tribunes—M. de Cobentzel and singular reserve of Bonaparte—Wit of Bonaparte upon the society of the Faubourg Saint Germain—Portrait of Mademoiselle de Beauharnais.

THE following day I was to be presented to the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte. It was a great affair for my mother; she occupied herself upon my toilet with more minute care than I imagine she had ever bestowed upon her own in the highest tide of her vanity. One thing disturbed her much: there was no etiquette, no ceremonial. "Nevertheless, he affects the little king," said my mother. The truth was that at this time the interior of the First Consul's family was like that of a very rich man, with no more forms; Madame Bonaparte had not even yet ladies in waiting.

We went to the Tuileries after the Opera, leaving the ballet of *Psyché* in the middle that we might not be too late, and arrived at ten o'clock. My heart beat as we alighted at the pavilion of Flora, at the door which precedes that in the angle so long called the entrance of the Empress. As we ascended the five or six steps before the door on the left, leading to the apartments on the ground-floor, we met Duroc and Rapp. "How late you are!" said Duroc. "It is near eleven o'clock."—"Ah!" added the brave Alsatian, "Madame Junot is a worker of marvels;

she is about to make an infidel of our good Junot." And he burst into a loud laugh.

I was desirous of turning back; but Junot replied, "Madame Bonaparte desired me to come here after the Opera."—"Oh!" said Duroc; "it is quite a different thing if Madame Bonaparte has appointed the hour."

At this moment the folding door of Madame Bonaparte's apartment opened, and Eugène de Beauharnais ran down. He was sent by his mother, because, having heard the wheels of a carriage within the court, and finding that no one came up, she began to fear lest by mistake, arising from the lateness of the hour, I might be told that she could not receive me. I was sensible of this attention, and the more so as the messenger was himself very fit to dispel apprehensions of a doubtful reception. M. de Beauharnais gave me his arm, and we entered the large salon together. This fine apartment was so obscure that at first entering I saw no one in it; for it was lighted only by two chandeliers placed on the mantelpiece, and surrounded with gauze to soften the glare. I was much agitated on entering; but an observation from Eugène de Beauharnais contributed wonderfully to restore my composure. - "You have nothing to fear," said he; "my mother and sister are so kind!" These words made me start; no doubt I might experience that emotion which a young woman is so liable to feel at a first presentation to strangers, especially when she has some reason to imagine that she may not be very cordially received; but my spirits recovered surprisingly.

Madame Bonaparte was in the same place which she then occupied as mistress of the house, and where afterwards she was seated as sovereign of the world; I found her before a tapestry frame prosecuting a work, three-fourths of which was performed by Mademoiselle Dubuquoy, whose ingenious hint that Marie Antoinette was fond of such employments had inspired Josephine's inclination for them. At the other side of the chimney sat Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais, an amiable, mild, agreeable girl, with the figure of a nymph, and beautiful light hair. Her

gracious manners and gentle words were irresistibly pleasing.

The First Consul was standing before the chimney with his hands behind him, fidgeting as he had already the habit of doing; his eyes were fixed upon me, and as soon as I recovered my self-possession I found that he was closely examining me; but from that moment I determined not to be abashed, as to allow myself to be overcome by fantastic fears with such a man would be ruin.

Madame Bonaparte stood up, came forward, took my two hands and embraced me, saying that I might depend upon her friendship. "I have been too long Junot's friend," she continued, "not to entertain the same sentiments for his wife, particularly for the one he has chosen." —"Oh! oh! Josephine," said the First Consul, "that is running on very fast! How do you know that this little pickle is worth loving? Well, Mademoiselle Loulou (you see I do not forget the names of my old friends), have you not a word for me?"

He had taken my hand, and drawing me towards him looked at me with a scrutiny which for a moment made me cast down my eyes, but I recollected myself immediately. "General," I replied, smiling, "it is not for me to speak first." The slight bend of his brow would have been imperceptible to any other person, but I knew his countenance well: he smiled almost instantly, and said, "Very well parried. Oh! the mother's spirit. Apropos, how is Madame Permon?"—"Ill, general. She suffers much; for two years past her health has altered so seriously as to cause us great uneasiness."—"Indeed! so bad as that; I am sorry to hear it, very sorry; make my regards to her. It is a wrong head—a devil of a spirit;[1] but she has a generous heart and a noble soul."

I withdrew my hand, which he had held during this short colloquy, and took my seat near Madame Bonaparte. The conversation became general and very agreeable. Duroc came in, and took part in it. Madame Bonaparte

[1] I have already said that I shall preserve the turn of Napoleon's phrases and his manner of speaking; it was original, and at once oriental and *bourgeoise*.

said little on subjects she did not understand, and thereby avoided exposing her ignorance. Her daughter, without saying more than is becoming in a young girl, had the talent of sustaining the conversation on agreeable topics. The events at this moment passed in rapid succession, and afforded large matter of conversation. M. de Cobentzel was expected at Paris; his arrival was spoken of, but without any relation to politics. Madame Bonaparte said that she had heard some one observe upon the astonishing resemblance between Count Louis de Cobentzel and Mirabeau. "Who said that?" asked the First Consul hastily. —"I do not exactly recollect. Barras, I think."—"And where had Barras seen M. de Cobentzel? Mirabeau! he was ugly; M. de Cobentzel is ugly—there is all the resemblance. *Eh, pardieu!* you know him, Junot; you were with him at our famous treaty, and Duroc too. But you never saw Mirabeau. He was a rogue, but a clever rogue! he himself did more mischief to the former masters of this house than the States-General altogether. But he was a rogue." Here he took a pinch of snuff, repeating, "He was a bad man, and too vicious to be tribune of the people; not but in my tribunate there were some no better than he, and without half his talent. As for Count Louis de Cobentzel——"

He took another pinch of snuff, and was about to resume his observations, but stopped as if struck by a sudden reflection. He thought, perhaps, that the first magistrate of the Republic should not so lightly give his opinion upon a man just named by a great Power to treat with him. He stopped then with a sentence half uttered, and turning to me, said:

"I hope that we shall often see you, Madame Junot. My intention is to draw round me a numerous family, consisting of my generals and their young wives. They will be friends of my wife and of Hortense, as their husbands are mine. Does that suit you? I warn you that you will be disappointed if you expect to find here your fine acquaintances of the Faubourg Saint Germain. I do not like them. They are my enemies, and prove it by defam-

ing me. Tell them from me, as your mother lives amongst them—tell them that I am not afraid of them." This sentence, spoken with harshness, gave me uneasiness from two causes: it was disobliging both to Junot and to me; it seemed to reproach him for taking a wife from a hostile society, and to hint that I came into his own with unfriendly dispositions. I could not forbear answering, perhaps hastily:

"General, excuse me if I cannot consent to do what is not in the province of a woman, and particularly in that of General Junot's wife; and permit me to carry from you to my friends only messages of peace and union; I know that they desire no others." And this was true.

I would not interrupt the relation of this interesting interview to describe the person and manners of Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, but I think it would be an injustice both to her and my readers to omit to describe her such as she appeared at my first introduction to her. Hortense de Beauharnais was at this time seventeen years old; she was fresh as a rose, and though her fair complexion was not relieved by much colour she had enough to produce that freshness and bloom which was her chief beauty; a profusion of light hair played in silky locks round her soft and penetrating blue eyes. The delicate roundness of her figure, slender as a palm tree, was set off by the elegant carriage of her head; her feet were small and pretty, her hands very white, with pink well-rounded nails. But what formed the chief attraction of Hortense was the grace and suavity of her manners, which united the creole languor with the vivacity of France. She was gay, gentle, and amiable; she had wit, which, without the smallest ill-temper, had just malice enough to be amusing. A polished and well-conducted education had improved her natural talents; she drew excellently, sang harmoniously, and performed admirably in comedy. In 1800 she was a charming young girl; she afterwards became one of the most amiable princesses of Europe. I have seen many, both in their own courts and in Paris, but I never knew one who had any pretensions to equal talents. She was beloved by every one, though, of all who

surrounded her, her mother seemed to be the least conscious of her attractions; I do not mean to say that she did not love her, but certainly she did not express that degree of maternal affection which Hortense de Beauharnais merited. Her brother loved her tenderly; the First Consul looked upon her as his child; and it was only in that country so fertile in the inventions of scandal that so foolish an accusation could have been imagined, as that any feeling less pure than paternal affection actuated his conduct towards her. The vile calumny met with the contempt it merited, and is now only remembered to be confuted.

CHAPTER XLIX.

The wedding-ball—List of guests—Swearing—Invitation to the First Consul—His visiting-cards—Diplomatic breakfast—Visit to the Tuileries, and invitation to Madame Bonaparte—The Monaco and *les deux Coqs*—The First Consul's closet—Charm of his physiognomy—The First Consul accepts an invitation to the ball—The first anniversary of the 18th of Brumaire, and the ball deferred—M. de Caulaincourt's indiscretion.

My mother had determined to give a ball on the 15th day after my marriage; it was an ancient custom, and though not now the fashion she would by no means forego it. One evening when we had dined with her, she required our assistance in arranging her plans: "For this ball," said she, "must be one of the prettiest that has been given this long time past; my house, it is true, is very small, but it must be turned into an enchanted parterre of flowers. Come, take your place at the desk, Madame Laurette, and make out our list of invitations, for all your husband's friends must be of the party." Junot thanked her, and kissed her hand. "Oh! surely," she replied; "your friends are my friends now, only they swear rather too much: and you, I have been told, can do so too when you are angry; you must leave off that ugly habit, it does not become a gentleman." Junot laughed, and held up his finger to me. "What, because she tells me that you swear," said my mother. "No, I hope she will never cease to pour all her confidence into my maternal ear; besides, remember, she has not yet made acquaintance enough with your ear for it to supplant mine; but come, to work."

Junot took the pen, and wrote down all the names

of the ladies, beginning with Madame Bonaparte and Mademoiselle de Beauharnais. He then waited for the name with which my mother would commence the list of gentlemen.

"The First Consul of the French Republic, one and indivisible; is not that the style?" said my mother. "The First Consul!" we all exclaimed together. "Yes, the First Consul; is there anything astonishing in that? I am tired of being on bad terms with any one, and besides——" "And besides," said Junot, laughing, "you think that perhaps you were more in the wrong than he."

"No, no," said my mother, "that is quite another affair. He was in the wrong altogether; but I considered that as Laurette might be daily in his society these sort of quarrels might produce disagreeable effects for her, and I wished to prevent that—was I not right?" We embraced her. "But the invitation," she added, "is not all; do you think he will accept it? do you think he will come?"—"I am sure of it; only name the hour that will suit you best, and I will come to fetch you," said Junot, enchanted at this prospect of reconciliation between his mother-in-law and his beloved general.

My mother looked at him with an air of astonishment perfectly laughable. "Fetch me! to go where?"—"Where!" returned Junot, as much surprised in his turn; "to the Tuileries, to tender your invitation to the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte."—"My dear Junot," said my mother, with the utmost seriousness and sang-froid, "you are quite, nay, perfectly mad." "It seems to me that what I say is, nevertheless, very sensible; that nothing, in fact, can be more reasonable," replied Junot, somewhat disconcerted by the apostrophe.—"And I tell you, you are mad. Would you have me go to request General Bonaparte to come again to my house, after having forbidden his appearance there?"

"How, then, do you propose to invite him?" asked Junot, with an accent impossible to describe. "Truly, how should I invite him? but precisely in the same manner as I do every one else, except that the card shall

be all in writing, and I will write it all in my own neat hand, which he knows perfectly well."

Junot strode up and down the room, exclaiming, "But that cannot be! You had better not invite him at all! He will think that you intend him a disrespect."—"He would be much mistaken, then. But he would think no such thing; and you will see that, after having received my note of invitation, he will do as all well-bred men would; he will call on me before the ball, or at least he will have a card left at the door."—"Do you think, then," said Junot, in the utmost surprise, "that he keeps visiting cards?"—"And why not? My dear child, because Bonaparte gains battles, is that any reason that he should not visit?"

For a long time my inclination to laugh had been suppressed with the utmost difficulty; Albert, throwing himself back in his arm-chair, had given way to his from the first; and this last observation, together with the stupefied astonishment of Junot, who, with his mouth half open, could not find words to answer, was altogether too much for my gravity, and I burst into one of those fits of wild mirth which one only enjoys at sixteen. My mother and Junot were still no less serious; my mother at intervals murmuring, "I do not see why he should not visit, and certainly I shall not go first." My brother and I became by degrees more reasonable, seeing that she was perfectly in earnest, and certainly intended that the First Consul should come first to her. Now it is true that not even a thought of royalty was yet attached to his name; but already for twelve months he had exercised the supreme authority of the State; and this power had placed him on an elevation which appeared quite natural and becoming to him; he was there, because it was his proper place.

Albert knew my mother's character, and that by further opposition we should irritate without persuading her; he therefore sat down to the desk, and requested her to dictate her list, which she did with as much self-possession and composure as if the First Consul had never existed. The list consisted of seventy men and forty

ladies—a large number for so small a house; but then, as now, it was a pleasure to be crowded, and the greatest approbation that could be expressed the day after a ball was, "What a charming fête! we were almost suffocated."

The next morning Albert breakfasted with us, and it was resolved in our little council that we should all three proceed immediately to the Tuileries, and, in my mother's name, make our personal request to the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte to honour with their presence the ball my family were to give on the occasion of my marriage; taking good care to say nothing of the written invitations which had been entrusted to me for delivery. Madame Bonaparte received us in the most gracious manner; it was in such cases that she appeared to the utmost advantage. She had already gone through all that a royal novitiate demanded, and it can scarcely be imagined with what ease she stepped into the station of Queen. She accepted of our invitation for herself and Mademoiselle de Beauharnais; the latter, she said, was absent from the Tuileries. She seemed, however, by no means willing that we should extend our invitation to the First Consul. "He has been," she said, "but to two fêtes since his entry upon the consulate—the one at Morfontaine, where policy led him to meet the American envoy; the other was the fête given him by the Consul Cambacérès on his return from Marengo; and besides," added she, "he dances but little."

"My sister," said Albert, with his natural mildness of manner, "will not readily admit that; the First Consul has often, *very often*, danced the *Monaco* and *les deux Coqs* with Laurette, to the sound of my eldest sister's piano. Do you know, Madame, that we may claim almost the rights of fraternity with General Bonaparte?"—"Yes, he has often told me so," she replied, with an affectation of friendliness. But this was not true, for I know that the First Consul never spoke of my mother to Madame Bonaparte, except she herself led to the subject, which she was not fond of doing.

After taking leave of Madame Bonaparte we pro-

ceeded by the staircase of the Pavilion of Flora, to the apartments of the First Consul. The aide-de-camp in waiting observed that the hour of admission was past. "But I have an appointment," said Junot. "And, Madame?" asked the aide-de-camp. He was the unfortunate Lacuée, killed at Austerlitz, nephew of the Comte de Cessac, and cousin of M. de Beausset.

"We are too recently married, my friend," replied Junot, "to be more than one and the same person; therefore, announce me, if you please; and though ladies do not often come to trouble your hermitage, show that you know how to be gallant, and give my wife your arm to the closet door." When the door was opened, and the First Consul saw me, he said, smiling very good-humouredly, "What means this family deputation?—there is only Madame Permon wanting to its completion. Is she afraid of the Tuileries, or of me?"—"My general," said my husband immediately, "Madame Permon would gladly have joined us, but she is very ill, and finds it impossible to leave her chamber to come to request a favour of you, which she is very desirous to obtain. My wife is charged to address to you her petition in form."

The First Consul turned towards me with a smile, saying, "Well! let me hear! What do you wish for?" It is difficult, if not impossible, to describe the charm of his countenance when he smiled with a feeling of benevolence. His soul was upon his lips and in his eyes. The magic power of that expression at a later period is well known; the Emperor of Russia had experienced it when he said to me, "I never loved any one more than that man!" I told the general what had been agreed upon, and had scarcely ended my little harangue when he took my two hands, and said, "Well! I shall certainly be at this ball. Did you expect I should refuse? I shall go most willingly." Then he added a phrase which he often repeated: "Though I shall be in the midst of my enemies; for your mother's drawing-room, they tell me, is full of them."

Junot now made a sign to us to take leave; we accordingly made our parting salutations, and the First

Consul, after pressing my brother's hand with as much cordiality as if we were still in my father's house, inquired on what day this ball should take place. "Next Monday, general; it is, I believe, the 10th of November."

"What! the 10th of November," said the First Consul, going to his escritoire; "that seems to me to be some particular day; let me see;" and as he spoke he found the calendar he was seeking. "I thought so," he added, on consulting it. "The 10th of November is the anniversary of the 18th Brumaire, and I cannot join a party on that day. Your mother will have no company; your acquaintance of the Faubourg Saint Germain will certainly not quit their retreats to make a festival of the anniversary of the re-establishment of the Republic. What concerns me personally," and his countenance as he spoke assumed an expression serious and severe, "is of little consequence, but I must see the Republic respected; it would not, therefore, be suitable that the anniversary of the day which restored it to us entire should be celebrated otherwise than as a family festival. I do not refuse Madame Permon's invitation if you will name another day."

The change was immediately resolved upon, and he himself named the 12th of November. "Do you receive Josephine?" he inquired. I answered that Madame Bonaparte had accepted for herself and her daughter the invitation which my mother, to her great regret, had not been able to give in person.

"Oh! I have no doubt but Madame Permon is ill," said the First Consul; "but there is idleness, if not some other motive which I will not mention in her absence. Is there not, Madame Loulou?" And so saying, he pulled my ear and hair till he made my eyes water, which I was not sorry for, as it furnished an excuse for not answering this blunt interpolation, and for the colour which flushed my cheeks. While this was passing between us and the future master of the world, another scene took place in the apartments of Madame Bonaparte below stairs.

M. de Caulaincourt paid his court very attentively to Madame Bonaparte; an old friendship or relationship

between them was connected with a remembrance of protection on his part, and of gratitude on hers. She was, in consequence, on very good terms with my little papa, and almost every morning, the pony, with its velvet saddle and gilded bridle, trotted from the Rue des Capuchins to the Tuileries. Here it arrived on the morning of our visit, just as we had left Madame Bonaparte, and the conversation naturally falling upon the invitation we had brought, M. de Caulaincourt, to whom my mother had related all that had passed on the preceding night, glorying in the firm stand she had made in favour of a written invitation, unceremoniously accused me of having mistaken my instructions, and very innocently repeated to Madame Bonaparte all that he had learned from my mother, of whose plans he perfectly approved. This unlucky incident produced a rather awkward dénouement on our return to the salon; but our apologies were graciously accepted, and whether or not the truth ever reached the ears of the First Consul it produced no visible result.

My mother easily perceived that it would be ridiculous for her to celebrate the anniversary of the 18th Brumaire; the change which we had made in the day consequently received her perfect acquiescence, and passed off without any observation.

CHAPTER L.

The ball and the flowers—The first country-dance—Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, Mademoiselle de Perigord, Mademoiselle de Caseaux and myself—The minuet de la Reine and the gavotte—The fine dancers—Madame Leclerc and the toilet of Madame Bonaparte—Noise of horses and the arrival of the First Consul—The dance interrupted—The First Consul's gray overcoat—Long conversation between the First Consul and M. de Talleyrand—M. Laffitte and the three-cornered hat—M. de Trénis and the grand bow—The First Consul listening to a dancing-lesson—Bonaparte not fond of long speeches—Interesting conversation between Bonaparte and my mother—Jerome, his debts, his beard, and superfluous travelling-case.

ALL was preparation in my mother's house for the expected ball, which she intended should be one of the most agreeable to be given this year in Paris. Our friends also looked forward to it with much impatience. My mother had already refused the requests of above forty men and twelve women for tickets. She was delighted when such requests were made to her. The arrangements for ornamenting the house were perfect; and when at length all the trees, plants, and flowers assumed the places her taste appointed them, and innumerable lights shone among them from lamps of every colour, the staircase and hall perfectly resembled an enchanted palace.

Madame Bonaparte arrived about nine o'clock, accompanied by her son and daughter, and led by Colonel Rapp. My mother met her in the middle of the dining-room; the other ladies she received at the door of the salon. She was polite and gracious to every one, as she so well knew how to be. She conducted Madame Bonaparte to the arm-chair on the right of the fireplace, and

begged her, with the hospitable grace of the South, to make herself perfectly at home. She must have appeared to her, what she actually was, a very agreeable and charming woman.

My mother was, perhaps, the prettiest woman in the room, after the First Consul's two sisters. She had been for some time in better health, and the respite from suffering had restored to her features that harmony and regularity in which her beauty consisted. She wore on this evening a dress, made by Madame Germon, of white crape, trimmed with bunches of double jonquils. Its form was Grecian, folding over the bosom, and fastened on the shoulders with two diamond clasps. Her head-dress had a degree of eccentricity in its composition which became her admirably. As she could not, or rather did not, choose to appear on the occasion of my marriage with her hair wholly uncovered, she had a toque of white crape (made by Leroi, who then lived in the Rue des Petits-Champs, and had already acquired some reputation), through the folds of which her fine black hair appeared, resembling velvet, intermingled with branches of jonquil, like those which trimmed her gown. The flowers were furnished by Madame Roux. She wore in her bosom a large bouquet of jonquils and natural violets, but exhibited neither necklace nor jewels of any kind except two very fine diamond drops in her ears. This attire was set off by a person whose elegance of figure and manner were at least her most striking ornament. I was proud of my mother.

At a quarter before nine o'clock Junot went to the Tuileries to be ready to attend the First Consul to my mother's, but found him so overwhelmed with business that it was impossible for him to name the hour at which he could arrive; but he was desired to request as a favour that the dancing might commence, the First Consul giving his assurance that he would certainly come, however late he might be compelled to make his visit. The ball then was opened at half-past nine. Junot danced with Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, Eugène de Beauharnais with me,

Hippolyte de Rastignac with Mademoiselle de Caseaux, and Mademoiselle de P—— with M. Dupaty. M. de Trénis was not yet arrived, nor M. Laffitte. These gentlemen were at this time in the extreme of everything that is inconceivable; and to join a party at two or three o'clock in the morning was nothing extraordinary with them.

I had this evening, in the opinion of my mother and all our old friends, an important duty to fulfil: it was to dance the *minuet de la cour* and the *gavotte*. For three weeks Gardel's long lessons had been renewed, that this minuet, which with my whole soul I detested, might be executed in perfection. I had entreated my mother to spare me this painful exhibition, but to no purpose. Not to dance the *minuet de la Reine* at a bridal ball would have been a dereliction of all established customs, which she could not by any means sanction.

M. de Trénis belonged to our society: he was a worthy man, and far from meriting the character which he gave himself of being nothing but a dancer. He possessed much information and some wit; natural good sense and a correct judgment, very capable of appreciating the ridiculous extravagance of his own words; that of his dress, though in the height of the fashion, was by no means so exaggerated. As of all the fine dancers of the day, he was the one with whom we were the most acquainted, I had engaged him to dance the *minuet de la cour* with me, hoping to be less timid with him than with MM. Laffitte or Dupaty.

At half-past ten General Bonaparte was not arrived; every one else was, and the five rooms in my mother's suite of apartments were much more than conveniently crowded. All the Bonaparte family except Joseph, who, I believe, was then at Luneville, came early.

Madame Leclerc, always beautiful and elegant, had taken her seat at a distance from her sister-in-law, whose exquisite taste in dress never failed to put her out of conceit with her own appearance, how carefully soever her toilet had been performed. "I do not understand," said

she to me, "how a person of forty years old can wear garlands of flowers!"

Madame Bonaparte had a wreath of poppies and golden ears of corn upon her head, and her dress was trimmed with the same. I was afraid that she would foolishly make the same compliment to my mother; and unwilling that a stupid remark should spoil the pleasure of the evening I answered that my mother, who was older than Madame Bonaparte, had also flowers on her head and round her gown. Madame Leclerc looked at me with an air of astonishment. "But it is quite different, —quite a different thing," said she.

At a few minutes before eleven the trampling of the First Consul's horse-guards was heard. Very soon afterwards the carriage drove up to the door, and almost immediately he appeared at the entrance of the dining-room with Albert and Junot, who had received him in the hall. My mother advanced towards him, and saluted him with her most courteous obeisance, to which he replied, with a smile:

"Eh! Madame Permon, is that how you receive an old friend?" and held out his hand. My mother gave him hers, and they entered the ballroom together. The heat was excessive. The First Consul remarked it, but without taking off his gray overcoat; and was on the point of making the tour of the room, but his eagle eye had already observed that many of the ladies present had not risen at his entrance; he was offended, and passed immediately into the bedroom, still retaining my mother's arm, and appearing to look at her with admiration.

Dancing had been discontinued as soon as he appeared, and Bonaparte soon perceived it by the stillness of the salon, from whence issued only the murmuring sounds produced by the observations made upon him in an undertone.

"Pray, Madame Permon," said he, "let the dancing be resumed; young people must be amused, and dancing is their favourite pastime. I am told, by the bye, that your

daughter dances equal to Mademoiselle Chameroi.[1] I must see it. And if you will, you and I will dance the *Monaco*,—the only one I know."

"I have not danced these thirty years," replied my mother.

"Oh! you are jesting. You look to-night like your daughter's sister."

M. de Talleyrand was of the party. The First Consul, after having spoken to us all in the most agreeable manner, entered into a conversation with him in my mother's bedroom, which lasted without interruption for three-quarters of an hour. Towards midnight he returned to the salon, and appeared determined to make himself perfectly agreeable to every one.

How great soever my repugnance to dancing this unfortunate minuet, I had no choice but to answer to the summons of my mother, who, without concerning herself whether I was maid or wife, expected me to be always obedient to her commands. At that time it was customary for young people to conduct themselves dutifully to their parents, not only from respect, but to avoid giving them pain. For a moment I thought myself safe. M. de Trénis was called for, but could nowhere be found. I went to tell my mother, but gained nothing. M. Laffitte was requested to supply his place. He had no hat; my mother soon found him one. All these difficulties removed, I at length went through the dreaded minuet, having whispered to Gardel not to allow the gavotte to be played; and reckoned my last courtesy a real happiness. M. Laffitte was reconducting me to my seat, holding in one hand an enormous three-cornered hat that he had borrowed of I know not whom, and leading me with the other, when we met M. de Trénis. He looked at me with so terrible an air that I became uneasy for the consequences of having danced the minuet with another

[1] Mademoiselle Chameroi was the finest dancer at the Opera. At this period Eugène Beauharnais was attached to her. It was on the occasion of her funeral that the singular history of the refusal of the curate of St. Roch to bury an actress took place, which is related further on. She died very young.

person. I told him mildly that I had waited till past midnight, and that my mother had at length required that I should dance with M. Laffitte. "I hope, my dear sir, that you will forget this non-observance of my engagement, and particularly as your absence was its sole cause."

He acquiesced in his disappointment, and seating himself between my friend Mademoiselle de Merigny and myself commenced a most ludicrous harangue upon the regret he experienced, which was the greater on account of my share in the loss; "for I shall never, never forget the spectacle I saw," added he. I was alarmed, and entreated an explanation; which, after listening to most high-flown compliments on the excellence of my own dancing, I obtained at length in the following terms: "That you should dance a minuet with a man—a good dancer, no doubt; yes, he dances well, but if he dance a country-dance well—he never, never in his life, knew how to make the grand bow with the hat—he cannot make the grand bow."

Mademoiselle de Merigny and I could not help laughing. But M. de Trénis was too deep in his subject to attend to the cause of our merriment. "That seems to surprise you," he continued; "I can easily believe it. Not to know how to put on one's hat!—for that is the science—it is not difficult to explain—stay—give me leave." Then taking us both by the hand, he led us to my mother's room, where there were but few persons, and placing himself before the glass in the pier hummed the close of the minuet air and began the salute with the most perfect gravity, putting on his cocked hat with all the effect so important an affair demanded. The laughing fit returned with redoubled force; but the comedy was not yet complete. Junot had joined us, and the First Consul, whose presence had not as yet caused us any constraint on account of his close conversation with M. de Talleyrand, now stepped gently behind M. de Trénis to share the amusement with which this original was providing us. He made a sign to Junot to engage him in conversation, which was easy, if dancing were the subject;

provided, however, that it were seriously treated. For he never laughed, he said, except the air of a country-dance was very gay, and then the orchestra compelled him to smile. "How do you agree with M. Laffitte?" said Junot, with as serious a countenance as he could command.

"Why," replied he, "as well as two men of talent can be supposed to agree when so nearly upon an equality. But he is an honest fellow, not at all envious of my success. It is true that his own may well render him indulgent. His dance is lively and powerful. He has the advantage over me in the first eight measures of Panurge's gavotte. But in the jetés! oh! there he has no chance: he has nerve, but I have grace."

The First Consul opened his eyes and ears, altogether unaccustomed to such rant. "It is prodigious," said he at length; "this man is much more irrational than many who are confined in mad-houses. Is he a friend of yours?"

"Not exactly; but he is an intimate acquaintance; that is to say, we see him twice a week. But, except at a ball, he never talks of dancing, and can reason cleverly upon the manners of ancient Greece; it is a portion of history he has very much studied. He speaks several languages, and, Albert says, is worth more than his reputation."

Bonaparte never listened to so long a discourse; I have learned that it never answered to make long speeches to him. He had returned to his place near M. de Talleyrand; I saw by the direction of his eyes that he was speaking of M. de Trénis. He met my eyes fixed upon him, and called me to him, to make me a compliment on my mother's ball; his praises seemed almost a reproach. My mother had been perfectly polite to him; but it appeared to me that she should have been more cordial. I went to her, and, persuading her to walk with me led her towards her own chamber, where I found the First Consul on the spot where I had quitted him; but Junot and M. de Villemanzy had replaced M. de Talleyrand. As soon as the First Consul saw my mother he went

direct to her, and said, "Well! Madame Permon, what have you to say to one of your old friends? It seems to me that you easily forget them. Do you know, I thought you very rigorous the other evening, and at the very time one of your friends held his knife in readiness?"

"Oh, horrible!" exclaimed my mother; "how can you, Napoleon, say such things?—*Per Dio tacete! tacete!*"

"But why would you not return my friendly salute? I took the first moment of recognising you to make it."

My mother alleged the weakness of her eyes, and not without cause, for they became very useless in the last years of her life; but General Bonaparte would not be put off with this excuse. "What am I to think?" said he; "are we no longer friends?"

"*Non posso dimenticare, caro Napoleone, che siete figlio dell'amica; fratello del mio buon Giuseppe, del caro Luciano, e di Paulctta.*"—The First Consul made a movement, which I noticed, and replied with a bitter accent:

"So, then, if I still hold a place in your regard, I owe it to my mother and my brothers. It may well be said that to expect friendship from a woman is to expect the sands of the desert to remain fixed."

This discussion gave me pain; it seemed that my mother remembered that unfortunate quarrel excited by one of our cousins, who never could indemnify us for the affection which we lost through his means. The First Consul walked in silence towards the fire. My mother was seated upon a sofa opposite to him, her arms crossed upon her bosom, and shaking her foot in the fashion which usually preceded a violent scene. Albert, going to and fro between the chamber and the salon, at this moment approached General Bonaparte to offer him an ice.

"I assure you," said he, "that neither Madame Permon nor myself require ice; indeed, I believe we are petrified; I knew very well that absence deadened remembrance, but not to such a point as this." He touched an unlucky string.

"Truly!" said my mother, with a constrained smile, but with her lips sufficiently opened to show her two-

and-thirty pearls (on which General Bonaparte cast his eyes; he spoke of them to me the following day);—"truly! one may be permitted to forget after an interval of some years. Did you not wish to persuade me that it was difficult to remember, after a few days, an action which affected the fate of an entire life?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the First Consul, and his countenance darkened in an instant. He knit that brow, the movement of which already agitated the universe; his under lip pressed strongly against the other; and, joining his hands behind him, he walked a few paces without speaking; but all this was scarcely visible, as Junot and my brother told me, when I returned from joining in a country-dance. The First Consul promptly resumed his air of serenity, and seating himself beside my mother looked attentively at her hand, which he had taken to kiss.

"It seems to me that you do not correct any of your faults, Madame Permon?" and he pointed to the bitten nails of her fingers.

"No," said my mother, "they and I have grown old together. Leave all in its place; it is only you who are forbidden to remain as you are; you have still so many steps to climb before you reach the summit of your glory that to wish you repose would be to wish harm to ourselves."

"Do you really think as you speak?"

"You know my sincerity. I do not always say all I think; but I never say what I do not think. Have you forgotten my frankness?"

Bonaparte took my mother's hand and pressed it affectionately. At this moment the clock struck two. He asked for his carriage.

"Will you not stay supper?" asked my mother.

"I cannot possibly," said he, with an accent of regret; "but I will come and see you again."

My mother smiled, and shook her head gently.

"Why that smile? do you doubt me, Madame Permon?" If in this evening either of us have doubted the

friendship of the other, I do not think it is I who should be accused of having caused that suspicion. Yes, I shall come and see you again. The Signora Lætitia shall bring me, since I must rest my claim to your regard upon her, or upon Joseph, or upon Lucien, or even upon Paulette; who knows? perhaps upon Jerome. Speaking of that brave little citizen, you brought him up well while I was far off. I find him wilful, and wilful in bad things. The Signora Lætitia spoils him so totally that I much doubt whether he will mend where he now is."

To speak of Jerome was to touch another chord which vibrated very sensibly on my mother's ear. "He is an excellent lad," said she; "all warmth of heart, and good sentiments. Jerome is a true sailor; let him tan himself in the sea air, and he will return to you a Duguay-Trouin, or at least a Duquesne."

This was not the only time in the course of the evening that my mother had advanced an opinion with which she was not perfectly satisfied; but she loved Jerome, I believe, almost as well as she loved me, and her partiality really went a great way. The First Consul was right when he said that at his return he found his brother singularly educated. The seniors of the family had taken care that everything should be in good order,—that is to say, Jerome was at the college of Juilly, and was frequently visited there by his family; but himself still more frequently visited Paris to offer the respects of a young gentleman of fourteen to Mademoiselle Emilie and Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais; then believing himself a man, the studies went on as they might. Jerome and I were of the same age; my mother, who coupled with his birth the unhappy circumstances of the death of M. Charles Bonaparte, loved him so much the more. In general, she had a warm affection for all the brothers, but had her preferences amongst them as amongst the sisters. Madame Leclerc was her favourite, and to such a degree that I, who could not share her prejudice, often had warm discussions with her on the subject, in which perhaps jealousy might have its share.

At that time I loved Madame Murat, the best of Napoleon's sisters, and Joseph and Lucien were, with the First Consul, those of the whole family whom I preferred. Jerome had been very much loved, very much spoilt, not only by my mother, but by my brother, and indeed by all of us. I did not find that when he advanced in life, and consequently when his sentiments might be expected to develop themselves, he was to my mother in particular what he ought to have been. I do not accuse him, but I shall have future occasion to prove that I was not mistaken. But this, after all, is no crime.

The First Consul related to us this same evening, while speaking of Jerome, that he had contracted one of the oddest debts that could be imagined for a youth of fifteen. The First Consul was at Marengo: his brother was already in the service; but being too young to be brought into battle was left at Paris. On the return of the First Consul, Bourrienne was presented with a number of bills, amounting in the whole to a considerable sum, the payment of which was pressing. Amongst the rest Biennais figured in particular for eight or ten thousand francs. Great inquiries were made, and many reports were spread, as to how so large a debt could have arisen? At length it was discovered that M. Jerome Bonaparte had purchased of M. Biennais, Rue Saint Honoré, at the sign of the Singe Violet, a magnificent travelling-case, containing everything that could be invented by elegance and luxury, in gold, mother-of-pearl, silver, and ivory, the finest porcelains, and the most beautifully executed enamels; in short, the whole was a jewel. But one very essential thing was wanting to this dressing-case, and that was a beard to make it useful; for whatever it contained would admit of no other application. Razors, shaving-pots of all sizes in silver and china; combs for the moustaches; in short, every article of convenience for shaving, but the beard was wanting; and, unfortunately, the young man who was but fifteen had some long years to wait for it. The First Consul told this little history in a very entertaining style.

When he left my mother's on the ball night he promised to come again to see her, but my mother had preserved so much distance of manner in their conversation as was likely to prevent all renewal of intimacy. I believe, however, that the definite rupture must be attributed to a cause, natural perhaps, but which was indelicately made use of. I shall frequently have occasion to revert to this subject—my pen takes it up involuntarily.

CHAPTER LI.

The tribunes and long harangues—The Consular Court and the Roman forum—M. Andrieux—Lucien, the author of the 18th Brumaire—Depression of Lucien, and remarkable visit—Lord Malmesbury—Madame Bonaparte and her brother-in-law—Embarrassment of the First Consul—Lucien announces his departure—*The road to the throne*—Lucien's children—Secrecy of Lucien's journey—The little beggar—Portrait of Lucien—The Fléchelle family and injustice repaired.

AT the period of my marriage the Consular Court was rather singularly organized. Its arrangement was somewhat affected by the strong prejudices of the First Consul. He wished it to be on a grand style, yet was fearful of incurring the reproach already directed against him by several tribunes, who, mistaking the *Palais Royal* (where equality no longer existed) for the Roman forum, delighted in making long harangues in which Cæsar, Brutus, Pericles, Solon, Aristides, and Lycurgus all found a place, but which had no more reference to the unfortunate French Republic than if its locality was beyond Tobolsk.

In the speech delivered by Andrieux towards the end of *Vendémiaire* France was at least mentioned, and attention pointed to her affairs; but, with the exception of some immoderate eulogies on several of our generals, this discourse was but ill calculated to answer the exigency of a moment when, recalled almost from the brink of the grave by the powerful ascendency of an extraordinary man, union and vigilance amongst her sons became even more necessary to guard against the too commanding influence of that ascendency over her destinies. I am, in my own mind, persuaded that had Bonaparte encountered

a reasonable resistance—a continual warning from one of the orders of the state instituted by himself—he would have learned to curb that impetuosity which, meeting no check from without, he suffered to lead him on unrestrained.

The Republic, or rather that republican Will, which, from the 9th *Thermidor* to the 18th *Fructidor* 1797, alone remained to us, was still represented at court by one man, who entered on the political arena precisely at that moment. A real passion for liberty was the sacred passion which inspired him. His head was filled with republican and Utopian ideas, which would have been perhaps impossible to realise, although engendered by a soul of the purest and noblest sentiments. I speak of Lucien Bonaparte. He called himself Brutus at Marathon, and this mixture of the Greek and the Roman was at this time much laughed at; but a single bond served to reconcile the incongruity, an ardent desire of establishing and maintaining the Republic in France; not that Republic whose very remembrance excites a shudder in the most hardened hearts,—those times which, far from being a consequence of the Revolution, constituted a deviation from it,—but a Republic such, in short, as a great people may possess. Alas! are we not ourselves an impediment to its establishment?

Lucien, immediately after the 18th Brumaire, was appointed Minister of the Interior.[1]

It is unfortunate that a prejudice, for it was certainly nothing else, prevented his being elected Second or Third Consul.

At first sight, the participation of two brothers in the Consulate would naturally lead to the conclusion that but one will direct the Executive; whereas, in reality, the national interest would have been far better defended than by a man such as the Consul Lebrun, who, unquestionably honest himself, was nevertheless too readily disposed to

[1] M. de Laplace preceded him, but only for a few days; his pursuits in science and those of the administration could not possibly advance together. When he was nominated, an acquaintance of mine made, with two strokes of a pencil, a charming little drawing of an astrologer falling into a well; the resemblance to M. de Laplace was perfect.

affirm every proposition, even of his second, and still more of his first colleague.

In accomplishing the events of the 18th Brumaire, at which he had laboured with an influential activity, whose remembrance should never have deserted Napoleon, it cannot be doubted that Lucien believed his brother would confer on France a Government that should render her at once happy at home and great and formidable abroad. As for war, it was then looked upon merely as a party of pleasure; in its prosecution, not only the glory but the good fortune of the French was calculated upon as certain. In the interior, on the other hand, misery was at its height: although not in the Consulate, as Minister of the Interior, much was in Lucien's power: the choice of prefects and of mayors; new municipal laws to be given to the Communes; the whole mode of election to be reformed; manufactures to be protected, which at that time were everywhere rising; new discoveries to be collected; and misery to be relieved by employment, the only alms which should be bestowed on the people: all this he foresaw and undertook with courage and success. But he soon appeared sad and unhappy. Obstacles multiplied around him; he had spoken of them to my brother-in-law; my mother, who tenderly loved him, perceived it before he opened the subject. Lucien was unhappy, and doubly so through the means of his brother. But in justice to Bonaparte, I must declare that he was unworthily deceived with respect to his brother; he was persuaded of the existence of facts entirely false. He was even inspired by some one with uneasiness for his personal safety. He never yielded to these suspicions, but the voice which accused his brother was one very dear to him. It was evident that he sought with avidity every thing that could afford him a ray of consolation amidst that perplexing obscurity with which others endeavoured to fill up the distance that fate had just established between the two brothers,—an interval which Lucien always respected, even when refusing to acknowledge it, but which the First Consul should have overlooked. A

violent animosity had, however, arisen between Madame Bonaparte and her brothers-in-law, which not only interrupted the domestic happiness of this numerous family, but proved in the end a source of the greatest misfortunes to herself.

I visited my mother every day, and frequently dined with her. One day that we had dined alone, Albert and M. de Geouffre being both absent, we had scarcely risen from table when Lucien arrived. He was mournful, very serious, and appeared in deep thought. My mother remarking it, he admitted it, and told us he was on the eve of departure; upon which my mother uttered an exclamation. "Did not you know it?" said he; "I take Geouffre with me."

"If you wish to let me know your affairs by my son-in-law," replied my mother, "command him to communicate them, for when you are in question he is a true Malmesbury."[1]

"Yes, I am going," said Lucien, crossing his arms over his bosom and contemplating the fire with that sombre distraction which indicates an acute and profound grief: "I am going! my counsels displease; and moreover there is at present a barrier between Napoleon and me which can never be removed, because it is beneath my character to justify myself, and thereby to recognise the legality of a tribunal which, on the contrary, I challenge. My brother believes the perfidious insinuations of a woman with whom he ought to be too well acquainted to sacrifice his family to her; he suspects the fidelity of a brother whose devotedness has been the sole means of opening to him the road to a throne."

[1] Lord Malmesbury was sent on a special mission to the Directory from England in the year VII., while M. de Talleyrand was Minister for Foreign Affairs. It is to be presumed that Lord Malmesbury's instructions were not very extensive, for at every word hazarded by Talleyrand,—who, it may be observed, did not himself waste many,—Lord Malmesbury uniformly replied: "Allow me to write home respecting that." (*Permettez que j'en écrive à ma cour.*") And as we seldom fail to take advantage of the ridiculous, a caricature was exhibited, in which Talleyrand, stepping up to the English Ambassador, inquires how he is; and Lord Malmesbury shows him, according to the custom of caricatures, a long paper inscribed with the words, "*Permettez-moi d'en écrire à ma cour.*"

"To a throne!" cried my mother.

Lucien replied only by a smile, at once melancholy and expressive; "Always remember, Madame Permon," rejoined he, "that I certainly had no such thoughts on the 18th and 19th Brumaire."

It may be well supposed that in speaking afterwards of Lucien to the First Consul I was careful not to repeat this part of the conversation.

"Are you going far?" inquired my mother. "I must not tell you; I ought not to have announced my departure. I request of Madame Junot not to speak of this conversation before her husband."

In fact some days afterwards Lucien quitted Paris.

A carriage, containing Arnaud, a miniature-painter named Chatillon, and M. Felix Desporte, preceded him, and took the road to Amiens, while Lucien, in his *berline*, with my brother-in-law, set out towards Bordeaux.

He had with him his two little girls, the youngest of whom was still in arms; and on these two little beings he lavished all the cares of the most attentive female.

My mother, learning that he was going to take his children, advised him to leave them with the kind and excellent Madame Joseph; but at the first word Lucien, starting from his chair, exclaimed, "No, no; I will not leave my children here; do no talk to me of separating from them! I may be accused of levity, of easy morals, but at least neither mother, brothers, children, nor friends, shall ever have occasion to reproach my heart." He was much agitated; my mother embraced him and said, "Well, you are right; take these poor little ones; they are no longer blessed with a mother, and a fond father can alone supply her loss."

A messenger was despatched after the carriage, which was journeying towards Amiens; it changed its course, and rejoined Lucien near Bordeaux. I know not the cause of all this mystery; perhaps it was designed to conceal from Austria, with whom negotiations were carrying on, the mission of the First Consul's brother as ambassador to Spain. This could not indeed be kept

secret above seven or eight days, but that is much in diplomatic relations; I state the facts as they occurred: Lucien arrived at Madrid, and replaced there two men whose abilities, when compared with his, made a very *médiocre* appearance; these were Berthier and Alquier.

Some time after the departure of Lucien an affair was much talked of, and his enemies would fain have misrepresented it; but the following is the exact truth. The ages of the children are particularly accurate, a matter of some importance to the good or evil face of the story.

A boy, eleven years of age, neatly dressed, was standing in the street Des Petits Champs, near the Place Vendôme, and asking alms of persons in whose physiognomy he could descry a more than common share of humanity. A young man, wrapped up in a large blue greatcoat, with knit pantaloons of gray silk, a round hat, and gold spectacles, casually looked upon the child as he passed. There was kindness in his countenance, and his smile emboldened the poor little importunate to hold out his hand; the gentleman frowned, yet gave him a coin of *douze sous* (sixpence).

"Why do you beg, child?" said he in a severe tone. The poor child began to cry, pointing with his finger to a woman and two little girls, the eldest of whom was ten, and the other nine, seated on the stone bench of the house which then stood in a little recess, where the passage to the Jacobin market now is.

"These are my mother and sisters," said he, sobbing. "My father is very ill, and I have a little brother younger than my sisters; I cannot work, and we must eat, and give my father his barley-water: how can this be done if I do not beg?"

The gentleman, overcome with such a tale of misery, approached the woman, asked her some questions, and having taken her address, left her a louis-d'or.

On his return to the Home Department, Lucien, who has no doubt been recognised in the portrait I have just drawn, charged a confidential person to make inquiries respecting the Fléchelle family. The result of these

inquiries was not only satisfactory but of a nature to extort a blush from the Government, had it been possible for the Directory to blush for its evil deeds. Fléchelle had been employed in the grant office, where his conduct was irreproachable, but in consequence of one of those intrigues too common under a venal Government he was dismissed without pension or indemnity; and, as security against his complaints, was calumniated to the minister of the day, who refused even to see him. This man had four children, and from an easy competence his family were suddenly plunged into absolute destitution. Overwhelmed with grief, the vigilance of his wife alone defeated an attempt at suicide, and soon remorse occasioned an illness. Lucien the next day sent them, through his confidential agent, a hundred francs, and an abundant provision of sugar, coffee, candles, oil, etc., a cartload of wood, and a sack of coals; he also conferred on Fléchelle, as a just indemnity, the brevet of a place at the *barrières*, worth two thousand francs.

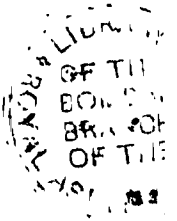
The agitating joy of the news proved too much for the unhappy father's frame, enfeebled by long illness; he died, and left his family again exposed to misery. Lucien, immersed in cares at the moment of his departure for Spain, was unable then to assist them, but the excellent Mrs. Anson, meeting with this desolate family, became a second consoling and succouring angel to them. Attempts were made to report the story at Malmaison in a very different light: I took the liberty of representing the truth. "The young girls are not sixteen or seventeen years of age," said I to Madame Bonaparte, "for I have seen them."—"Then I have been deceived," replied she; "but you have much affected me by the misfortunes of this poor family; give me Madame Fléchelle's address, for I will send to her to-morrow; I wish to have my part in the good work." She sent them, I believe, forty francs. Madame Bonaparte was often compassionate, but the universality of her protection and her recommendations often made her ridiculous, even in the eyes of those to whom she was benevolent.

Josephine

Engraved by W. Read from a Miniature by Leahy

Lejeune Bonaparte

LONDON, RICHARD BENTLEY & SON, 1882



CHAPTER LII.

The Consular Court—Madame Bonaparte's apartments—Functions of M. de Benezeck and the republicans—The aides-de-camp—Chamberlains—The grand dinners at the Tuileries—Improvement of morals—The ladies of the emigration—Installation at the Tuileries—The two processions—General Lannes's broth—The fortnight's parades—Intercourse of the First Consul with the soldiers—My Cashmere shawl, and my father-in-law's watch—The Swedish Minister and the Batiste handkerchief—Bonaparte, a drummer, and the sabre of honour—The Baron Ernsworth—The King of Spain's horses—The diplomatic corps in 1800—M. de Lucchesini and the Italian harangue.

THE Consular Court at the moment of my marriage was at its highest point of perfection. Its etiquette was afterwards totally changed; there was ceremony on one hand, while on the other the design was popularity, though unsuccessful.

Madame Bonaparte occupied the whole ground floor of the Tuileries, which was afterwards her residence as Empress, and also that of Maria Louisa. Adjoining her dressing-room was the small apartment of Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, consisting of her bedchamber, and a study scarcely of sufficient dimensions to render the smell of her oil paints endurable, when she this winter[1] painted her brother's portrait. The apartments of Madame Bonaparte were furnished tastefully, but without luxury; the great reception-salon was hung with yellow draperies; the movable furniture was damask, the fringes of silk, and the wood mahogany. No gold was to be seen. The other rooms

[1] This same winter of 1800 the Tuileries caught fire, and Madame Beauharnais's portrait of her brother, which was a strong likeness, was consumed. This fire was imputed to incendiaries, but falsely; it was occasioned by ill-constructed flues.

were not more richly decorated; all was new and elegant, but no more. The apartments of Madame Bonaparte, however, were destined only for private parties and morning visits.

The larger assemblies were held upstairs. As yet there was neither chamberlain nor prefect of the palace; an old counsellor of State, formerly Minister of the Interior, M. de Benezeck, was charged with the internal administration of the palace, which was at first a little difficult to introduce amongst what remained of true republicanism. The functions of M. de Benezeck embraced those afterwards divided between the Grand Chamberlain and the Master of the Ceremonies. The *maîtres d'hôtel* and ushers performed the subaltern offices, and the *aides-de-camp* supplied the place of chamberlains.

The First Consul was in the habit of dining two hundred persons every ten days. These dinners were given in the gallery of Diana, and the guests were of all ranks and classes, always including the diplomatic body, which at this time was become tolerably numerous. The wives of civil functionaries, of generals and colonels, formed the society, for as yet no one ventured to say the court of Madame Bonaparte. The general was rigid in the choice he made, not for his quintidian routs, but for the private and frequent invitations to Malmaison, and afterwards to St. Cloud. It is a fact, which only prejudiced minds will dispute, that the First Consul wished to perpetuate, as far as lay in his power, the amelioration of morals produced by the Revolution. This will perhaps excite a smile in the perusal; nevertheless, it is certain that the morals of the existing generation have been retempered by the Revolution.

Adversity is a hard school; its lessons have not been spared, and we had not the example of a corrupt court to frustrate their advantages. Perhaps, had the Revolution not run its course, such a change might have been effected amongst the highest classes by the same example which had been formerly so pernicious. Louis the Fifteenth had both poisoned Paris and the provinces with a breath

of corruption, which spread as an infectious pestilence through the whole kingdom; and all the virtue of the unhappy Louis the Sixteenth scarcely sufficed to repress among depraved spirits, with whom all kinds of morality were a subject of mockery, the noisy and haughty expression of sentiments which in their estimation belonged to good society. Vice and disorder were indeed no longer protected by the heads of the State, but levity and immodesty in all that related to the reputation and fate of the female sex were but too much in vogue at the moment of the Revolution. The misfortunes of that era cast a shade of seriousness even over those who by age and fortune were placed in a sphere of noise and folly. Celebrated names may be cited to the contrary, but my assertion is not thereby invalidated. Exceptions are said to prove rules.

It is certain that in 1800, when the court of the Tuileries was formed, society wore an appearance of morality and domestic virtue which it had never before displayed in France. The Noblesse, or what was at length by common consent denominated the *Faubourg St. Germain*, was constrained to follow the general current, although here again some exceptions were known in ladies who founded their fame on the importation of follies from Brussels, Coblentz, etc., and afterwards from England. Eventually, the imperial court, like all else pertaining to sovereignty, spread its malign influence. It was, however, comparatively but little open to censure, as the Emperor exercised a magical sway over every woman admitted to his court. But for the present we must confine ourselves to the Consulate, one of the most strikingly interesting periods of Napoleon's life.

When the different powers had adopted the new constitution proposed after the 18th Brumaire, and which I believe was the fourth they were called upon to sanction, the Government quitted the little Luxembourg for the Tuileries. It may be observed that the First Consul, who had at first lodged the Third Consul in the Pavilion of Flora, soon retook the sole possession of it, and M.

Lebrun, like Cambacérès, retired to the occupation of a private house.[1] The whole consular triumvirate, however, was present at the reception of ambassadors or of national bodies. The 30th *Pluviose*, in the year VIII. (19th February 1800), the First Consul took possession of the palace of the kings, which indeed, from the commencement of the revolution, had been occupied by the National Representatives. At this time the constitution of the 18th Brumaire exalted the consular power above all other national authorities: it represented in itself the French people; and such an authority required a suitable abode. He who had witnessed the removal from the Luxembourg to the Tuileries on the 30th *Pluviose* of the year VIII., if he had then fallen asleep to the sound of military music, playing all our patriotic airs, and had been awakened by the thunder of cannon on the morning of the 2d December, announcing that the Emperor Napoleon was about to be crowned by the Pope in Notre Dame, would have discovered a curious contrast between the two processions. In the first, on account of the scarcity of private carriages at that time in Paris, it was necessary to engage for counsellors of State and senators hackney coaches, whose numbers were covered with white paper, producing an effect far more ludicrous than if the numbers had remained visible.

On the day of his installation at the Tuileries, scarcely had the First Consul arrived before he mounted his horse and held a review in the court of the palace, which was not then surrounded by a railing, but enclosed by ill-jointed boards; and the Place du Carrousel was then small and very irregular. The change was rapid; a word from Napoleon was sufficient.

The First Consul admitted that he was happy during

[1] Cambacérès lived at the Hotel d'Elbœuf, in the Place Carrousel, opposite the Tuileries. The Consul Lebrun had the Hotel de Noailles, Rue Saint Honoré. This appropriation was made in conformity to the family wants of the two consuls. Lebrun had his mother-in-law and five children with him (his eldest daughter, who soon afterwards married M. de Plancy; the youngest, now Madame de Chabrol; and his three sons, Charles, Alexander, and Augustus Lebrun), he required therefore a more spacious dwelling than Cambacérès, who lived alone.

his reviews. "And you too, I am sure, are well content while I am with your conscripts," said he one day to General Lannes. "You do not grumble because the parade retards our dinner for an hour."—"Oh! dear no," replied General Lannes, "it is all alike to me, whether I eat my soup warm or cold, provided you will set us to work at making a hot broth for those rascally English."

He had an aversion for the English that I have never observed in any other general of the Emperor's army, even of those who had fought under the Republic.[1]

The quintidians (for we must speak the language of the period) were chosen for reviews, or rather for parades, in the court of the Tuileries. These parades were a spectacle worth seeing, especially during the Consulate. Under the Empire they might be more magnificent; but in 1800 their splendour was wholly national. It was the glory of France that we contemplated in those squadrons and battalions, which, whether composed of conscripts or veterans, equally impressed with fear the foreigner who surveyed them from the windows of the palace; for the ardour of the young troops was fostered by constantly beholding the old musketeers of the Consular Guard covered with scars; and were ready, even while under arms, to sing in chorus, like the young Spartans:

'Comme vous, un jour nous serons
Vaillans et combattans,
Nous aussi, nous vaincrons! etc.[2]

The First Consul took pleasure in these reviews, which would sometimes occupy him for five hours together,

[1] It is singular that the eldest son of the Marshal was married to an Englishwoman, and it was reported that a younger son was about to follow the example. This proves that sentiments are not always hereditary, and happily, for hatred is but a sorry sentiment. It seems, however, strange to see the affections of a family thus take a direction diametrically opposed to those of its head. I believe his daughter-in-law might have cured him of his prejudices; she was a beautiful, amiable, and charming person.

[2] We also shall, like you, be one day,
Valiant warriors,
We also, we will conquer, etc.

without a moment's interval of repose. All the regiments in France came alternately to Paris, and passed in review with the guards every fortnight at noon. The First Consul was on these occasions always attended by the aid-de-camp on duty, the minister of war, the general commanding the first division, and the Commandant of Paris, the commissary-general, the commissaries of war attached to the city of Paris; in short, all persons to whom orders must be immediately transmitted, in case the First Consul should, in the course of the inspection, find any alteration or improvement requisite. By this means no delay could arise in the communication of orders: everything was done instantaneously and satisfactorily; for it was well understood that the eye of the chief closely superintended all, and that if punishment were awarded to negligence, punctuality would be duly appreciated.

Sometimes he galloped along the ranks, but this was rarely; he never, indeed, sat his horse, unless the troops had already passed in review and he was satisfied that nothing was wanting. Even then he would address a few questions to two or three soldiers casually selected; but generally after having rode along the ranks on his white horse (*le Désiré*) he would alight, and converse with all the field-officers, and with nearly all the subalterns and soldiers. His solicitude was extended to the most minute particulars—the food, the dress, and everything that could be necessary to the soldier, or useful to the man, divided his attention with the evolutions. He encouraged the men to speak to him without restraint. "Conceal from me none of your wants," he would say to them; "suppress no complaints you may have to make of your superiors. I am here to do justice to all, and the weaker party is especially entitled to my protection."

These words he one day addressed to a demi-brigade (I believe it was the 17th), aware that the regiment before its removal to Paris had suffered deprivations in the department where it had been in garrison. Such a system was not only attended with immediately beneficial

results, but was adroitly adapted to answer a general and not less useful purpose. The army and its chief thus became inseparably united, and in the person of that chief the army beheld the French nation.

Thus the State, through him, dispensed both blame and commendation. Besides, Paris by this means became acquainted with the army; and the troops, alternately visiting the capital, ceased to regard it as another continent, and themselves as foreigners in it.

My husband, who invariably attended the First Consul on these parades, communicated to me everything remarkable; and in reporting the achievements of a day, which to other men would have comprised the labour of a month, would add: "All this proceeds with magic mechanism; this man is a supernatural being." Junot, it is true, might view his beloved general with prejudiced eyes; but not on these occasions, for he was at this period of his life truly admirable.

The diplomatic corps showed great eagerness to witness the parades, a privilege usually enjoyed by foreigners from the windows of General Duroc, who already occupied that part of the ground floor at the end of the Empress's apartments. From the same place I saw the first parade after my marriage, on which occasion an amusing adventure happened to my father-in-law. Junot's attendance being required on horseback, he could not escort me to Duroc's, but entrusted me to his own family, who themselves had never seen a parade. Arrived at the railing of the Pont-Royal, we alighted, and crossing the garden, endeavoured to gain on foot Duroc's door, which is situated at the right corner of the vestibule; but it was late, and we were compelled to make our way through a dense crowd. My mother-in-law, always happy, and always merry, only jested on the pummellings she encountered; but her husband, quite unaccustomed to such things, was in terrible ill-humour, and railed particularly at the carelessness of young Parisian ladies, who would risk handsome Cashmere shawls in such a crowd, repeatedly assuring me that I should lose mine, and at the same

time boasting his own prudence in securing his watch by guarding it constantly with his hand.

His cautions and vaunts were of course alike overheard, and as the most effectual means of momentarily eluding his vigilance, a dexterous twitch was given to my shawl; the manœuvre completely succeeded — I screamed, the shawl was saved; but, alas! that moment sufficed for the abstraction of the carefully-guarded watch; and its unfortunate master, on discovering his loss, clamorously lamented over an old and valued servant of thirty-five years' standing, till reminded by Madame Junot that it stopped about once a week, and had within the last year cost him fifty francs in repairs.

Meanwhile we had reached Duroc's door, and were placed at a window. The parade had not yet commenced. The officers were silently promenading in the ranks of their respective regiments; speaking, occasionally, but only in a whisper, to a soldier or subaltern, when the carrying of a weapon, or the position of a hat seemed to demand rectifying. This general hush was not inspired by fear of the First Consul, for he was adored by the army and its chiefs, as well as its subordinates, who were desirous of meriting his praises. Oh! what a time was that!

It would be difficult to describe the impression made on me by this first spectacle of a review.

Junot, who knew the passionate enthusiasm of my patriotism, had warned me that I should be much agitated; he kissed his hand to me in passing, and smiling to see my handkerchief at my eyes, whispered to Duroc, when both again looked at me, and I observed that my emotion affected them. How could it be otherwise? they too loved their country, loved her glory, and the man who thus dazzled us by the splendour of that glory with which he illumined all France. And then these soldiers, who gazed on him with eyes in which were distinctly legible— "Yes, we will die for the greatness of France, and for his renown; we are ready; where must we march?" And himself answering these tacit oaths by paternal affection;

questioning the soldiers as to their birthplace and their parents; acquainting himself with their situation, and supporting with a pension the mother whose son had left his farm and his vineyard to defend his country. Oh! what a time was that!

A gentleman sat near me whose admiration of the scene before him was so profound and so worthy of the occasion that it struck me; he was a foreigner, and wore a badge so singular that I could not resist the impulse of curiosity, and was indiscreet enough to inquire the meaning of it. It was a very fine batiste handkerchief of extraordinary whiteness, tied round his arm like the scarf of an aid-de-camp. "It is a memorial of my sovereign and of a glorious day, Madame," answered he; and announced himself as the Baron of Ernsworth, the Swedish Minister. I introduced to him the parents of General Junot, to whom he was as polite as he could have been to all the Montmorencies and all the La Tremouilles of France; he was near fifty years of age, and of a fine figure, perhaps somewhat too much *embonpoint* for the chaste elegance of the military costume which he wore. He spoke, with an expression which went to my heart, of the reputation of him whose name I bore. "So young," said he, "and already so famed; but with such a captain how can the lieutenants, though but children, be otherwise than worthy sons of their country!"

At this moment the First Consul stopped under our window, and said to a drummer of about sixteen or seventeen, "So it was you, my brave boy, who beat the charge before Zurich." The countenance of the young soldier was suffused with crimson, but it was not timidity which called the flush to his cheek. He raised towards the First Consul his large black eyes, sparkling with joy at being thus publicly distinguished, and replied in a half-tremulous, half-confident tone, "Oui, mon général."

"It was you, too, who at Weser gave proof of the most gallant presence of mind by saving your commander." [1] The youth blushed still deeper, this time from

[1] I was particularly struck by this fact, because all the occurrences of this

modesty, and answered, in a lower voice than before, "Oui, mon général."—"Well, I must discharge the debt of the country; it will be paid you not in a ring of honour, but a sabre of honour; I appoint you a subaltern in the Consular Guard; continue to behave well, and I will take care of you."

As the First Consul ceased speaking he raised his eyes to the low window at which we were seated, and, touching his hat, saluted us all with a gracious smile. My mother-in-law's eyes filled with tears, "How ought we to love this man!" said she, crying and laughing together; "see how the poor boy is overpowered." The young drummer was leaning on the shoulder of a comrade and following Bonaparte with his eyes. He was pale as death, but how eloquent were his looks! I know not what may have become of him; but I will answer for it if his life were sacrificed for Napoleon it cost him no regret. He was in the evening the subject of my conversation with the First Consul; he listened with interest, and addressing Berthier, who was just arrived from Spain to take the portefeuille of Minister of War, desired him to take down the young man's name, and provide him with outfit for his new rank. He may be at this day either a general or of the number of the dead; one or the other he most assuredly is. This parade was selected for my first attendance because some spirited horses sent to the First Consul by the Spanish King were then to be presented. The ceremony was said to recall the equestrian present made to Cromwell by a German prince. I know not what the Mecklenburgh horses might have been, but the Spanish were sixteen most beautiful creatures, both in coat and form; fourteen were from the royal stud, and two of them from the studs of the Count of Altamira

first parade made a deep impression on my mind; but the military annals of the period are filled with similar anecdotes, too frequent to obtain insertion in *The Moniteur*, or other journals. Speaking of the above the same evening to the First Consul, as comparable to the noblest deeds of antiquity, he replied, "Bah! ask your husband; he will tell you there is neither regiment nor demi-brigade in the army that could not cite ten such. He himself would be the hero of several."

and the Duke of Medina Cœli; and these latter were the tallest and finest of the troop; the first, El Jounalero, a really superb animal, and the other of equal size and younger, showed the fire, the slight fetlock, and arched neck of the Arabian breed. After the parade Junot introduced me in all the forms of etiquette to the Baron d'Ernsworth, who, at my request, promised me a full narrative of that day so memorable for Sweden, in which, since he still wore its insignia after a lapse of twenty-eight years, he must apparently have borne an important part.[1]

The diplomatic corps was at that time composed of the Spanish and Roman Ambassadors, the Ministers of Denmark, Sweden, Baden, and Hesse Cassel; the Dutch Ambassador, M. Schimmelpening, celebrated for his beautiful and most courteous wife; ambassadors from the Cisalpine and Ligurian Republics, and a Swiss minister.

Prussia, still desirous of an accommodation with us, had, in October 1800, despatched M. Lucchesini on a special mission, but his credentials as minister-plenipotentiary were not presented till 1801 or 1802; he remained but a few years with us, and after the campaign of Jena returned no more to France. The First Consul disliked him, and accused him of intriguing.

"Not that he entraps me," said Bonaparte; "but he willingly would, and that offends me. If those who negotiate with me did but know how much more surely their tortuous path tends to ruining themselves than to misleading me, they would choose a straighter road." An attention which M. Lucchesini hoped would work wonders was, on the contrary, displeasing to the First Consul, and threw the foreign diplomatist into a dilemma from which he could never recover, because he was long unconscious of it; this was, haranguing the First Consul in Italian on

[1] This revolution took place on the 18th of August 1772. The partisans of Guiland adopted as a rallying-sign a white handkerchief tied round the arm; and the king, after his final success, granted, as an honorary recompense to his faithful adherents, permission to wear for life a white handkerchief round the left arm, in commemoration of the service they had rendered to the crown.

delivering his credentials. Bonaparte had a strong objection to being addressed in Italian; he was, and chose to be, a Frenchman.

Soon after this the Congress of Luneville gave us peace with Austria, and that of Amiens with England. Russia also became our ally, and all this within less than a year. These are delightful recollections, and again I exclaim: Oh! what a time was that!

CHAPTER LIII.

Revival of the public prosperity—Destruction of the bands of robbers—M. Dubois, Prefect of Police—The exhibition of 1800—David and the picture of the Sabines—Girodet, and the vengeance of an artist—The satirical picture of Danaë—Gérard—Belisarius and the portrait of Moreau—The King of Spain's pistols given to General Moreau—Remarkable words of Napoleon—Moreau's distrust of him—Napoleon's popularity.

I HAVE already observed with what rapidity General Bonaparte had succeeded in consolidating a corps, which every day acquired new strength and stability. All who surrounded him, it must be acknowledged, lent their aid with a persevering ability, of which he could thoroughly appreciate the advantages. Every day brought news of the seizure of some fresh band of brigands, robbers of diligences, forgers, or false coiners; the latter especially were very numerous. Dubois, the prefect of police, was extremely zealous and active in discovering the guilty, and such as under futile political pretexts disturbed the public tranquillity; he was inestimable in his place, and Napoleon, who undoubtedly knew how to discern and to employ the men who would answer his purpose, took care not to remove him from his office till after the fire at Prince Schwartzenburg's ball.

Not only were all the interior wheels of the State machine beginning to play, but even the arts, that more silent and centrical spring, afforded striking proofs of the reviving prosperity of France. The exhibition was this year particularly good. Guérin, David, Gérard, Girodet, and a powerful assemblage of talent, excited by that emulation which the fire of genius always inspires, pro-

duced works which will hereafter raise our school to an elevated rank. The picture of the Sabines and of Marcus Sextus, besides several portraits, adorned the exhibition of paintings for the year 1800.

I will here notice some circumstances connected with them worth preserving, and not recorded in the journals. The first is somewhat unworthy of the talent of David. On some frivolous pretence, instead of sending his Rape of the Sabines to the salon, he privately exhibited it on payment of a franc, to the peril and danger of Parisian mothers, who, as was observed in a pretty little vaudeville which appeared at the time, dared not take their daughters with them.

Girodet was then in the full vigour of his genius, and united with it a mind of a superior order; but he was irascible and passionate, of which this year afforded an instance capable of tarnishing his high character.

He had taken the portrait of a female celebrated for her beauty and dramatic talents, and some discussion arising respecting the payment, the husband imprudently indulged in some very disparaging expressions, which were repeated to the enraged artist, who, disfiguring the portrait with a knife, returned it with an intimation that the lady might dispose as she pleased both of it and its stipulated price, as he should pay himself in his own way. If Girodet had confined himself to the threat, which was intended no doubt to alarm the parties, all would have been well, but he went further, and was wrong in so doing.

The salon was to be open for some days to come; with a rapidity of pencil difficult to conceive, he painted and caused to be placed at the exhibition a picture of extraordinary merit, representing the interior of a garret. In one corner was a miserable bedstead, covered with a wretched mattress and a blanket full of holes; on this lay a young and beautiful maiden, with a head-dress of peacock's feathers, having no other clothing than a tunic of gauze, through which were seen a pair of legs of gigantic thickness. She held this dress with her two hands to

catch a shower of gold that fell from the roof of the garret. Near the bed was a lamp, whose dazzling brightness attracted a crowd of butterflies, who all found their destruction in the traitorous light. Beneath the bedstead was seen an enormous turkey, stretching forth one of his feet, on the toe of which was a wedding-ring. In an obscure corner of the room was an old woman, dressed like a beggar, resembling perfectly a decrepit wretch who was often seen asking alms at the gate of the Palais Royal, and who, it was said, was the mother of the original in the cut picture, and of whom there was a striking likeness in the recumbent Danaë. Other allusions in the picture were equally remarkable, amongst them a frog swelling itself to an unnatural size, etc.

From the first moment of its exhibition this picture attracted the undivided curiosity of the visitors; but whether Girodet (who afterwards testified some regret for the extremity to which his resentment had been carried) relented, or whatever the cause, the picture was in a few days withdrawn.

A piece of a different kind, and the principal ornament of the salon, was Gérard's portrait of General Moreau. The hand which portrayed Belisarius and Psyché was there distinctly traceable. It was a *chef-d'œuvre.* Not only was the resemblance perfect, but it seemed to possess a soul. It was not colour laid on canvas, it was animate; it was General Moreau himself who looked upon you.

The position, too, was admirably chosen. It would have been easy and natural to represent him in full action, with all the splendid appendages of military costume, for assuredly Moreau has more than once headed his troops in the hour of danger; but he was habitually calm and reflective; this, therefore, was the expression Gérard judiciously selected, and the dress and attitude were in keeping. Judging by other works of Gérard, this will probably always retain the beauty of its colouring.

Independently of his professional talent, Gérard was eminently gifted, and all his compositions are full of mind.

His Belisarius is admirable; there are but two persons, an infant and an old man, but no circumstance is omitted that can excite interest in favour of the old Roman general. In the background of that gray head, stamped by Justinian with the anathema of mendicity, is seen only a desert, and a scorching yet stormy horizon. The features of his youthful guide already exhibit the livid paleness of death. Belisarius is thus alone with the agony of death on a narrow path, at the brink of a precipice: one step and he must fall. His arm, which advances a useless staff, seems to start from the canvas; he is abandoned by all Nature.

The portrait of Moreau reminds me of an anecdote concerning him, which occurred precisely at that time, and was afterwards related to me by Junot, who was an eye-witness. When the rupture of the armistice in Italy and Germany was foreseen, General Moreau came to Paris to receive the orders of Government. He arrived at ten in the morning of the 17th October, and instantly, without even changing his boots, went to the Tuileries. The First Consul was at the time in the council of State, but as soon as he heard of General Moreau's arrival he hastened to hold a conference with him. While he was in the salon, the Minister of the Interior, Lucien Bonaparte, happened to enter, bringing a pair of pistols of extremely fine and curious workmanship, which Boutet had just completed by order of the Directory as a present for the king of Spain. They were valuable, both for the skill the artist had applied to their construction and for a great quantity of diamonds and precious stones with which they were embellished. "These arms come very àpropos," said the First Consul, presenting them to General Moreau with that smile which could win hearts of stone—"General Moreau will do me the favour to accept them as a mark of the esteem and gratitude of the French nation."

"Citizen Minister," added Bonaparte, turning towards his brother, "have some of the battles of General Moreau engraved on the pistols, but not all; we must leave some

room for diamonds. Not because the general attaches much value to them; I know that his republican virtue disdains such baubles, but we must not altogether derange the design of Boutet."

Methinks, after such expressions, Moreau might have placed confidence in the friendship Bonaparte offered him. Why should the First Consul have flattered him? Why, especially, should he at that time have offered him a hand which was not sincerely friendly? Was it to flatter the popularity of Moreau? At this period the popularity of Bonaparte was far superior to his. Hohenlinden was not then gained; and even after that brilliant victory Napoleon had no cause to dread a rival in the hearts of Frenchmen; at this period he was really beloved.

CHAPTER LIV.

The Eastern Queen at the *Comédie Française*—Pauline and her portrait—The young sempstress of M. de Sales—Marriage of convenience, and the army of Egypt—Cavalcade of asses—Dinner at General Dupuy's, and the wife without her husband—The cup of coffee and the orange—Bonaparte, Berthier, and the husband ambassador—An English tour—*Gallantry* of Kléber—Goodness of Desgenettes—Return to France, and the divorce—Dread of scandal, and the wife with two husbands—Saint Helena, and admirable conduct.

I WAS one day at the *Comédie Française* with my husband, attentively listening to Talma in the part of Orestes, when Junot, touching my arm, told me to look attentively at a young woman he was about to salute, and who was seated between Berthier's box and our own.

My eye followed his salute, and I saw a woman of about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, florid as a young girl of fifteen, and of a gay and agreeable countenance.

Her flaxen hair formed the only ornament of her head. She was wrapped in a magnificent white Cashmere shawl, with an embroidered border, and appeared to be *en négligé*. She returned Junot's salute with an air of acquaintance which surprised me, and I inquired her name.

"It is Pauline," said he, "our Eastern Queen." He had already mentioned Madame Fourès to me, to caution me against the indiscretion of naming her before Madame Bonaparte. "This, then, is Madame Fourès," said I, and instantly put to him all the inquiries one woman will make concerning another whom she sees for the first time. He told me she had natural wit, and a desire of distinc-

tion, but a total ignorance of the manners of the world; that is to say, of good and elegant manners.

"I like her much," said Junot; "she is kind-hearted, simple, and unaffected, always disposed to join in mirth, and still more ready to oblige. I have a friendship for her, and hope to prove it; but there are about the person of the First Consul men who were at her feet in Egypt, and have since refused to know her, and repulsed her in the little intercourse she has been obliged to hold with them. Duroc, who has honour and a feeling heart, told me that the poor young creature knew not what would have become of her had she not opportunely met with him to convey a letter for her to General Bonaparte. She is no longer in want of anything, and this is no more than a debt which the First Consul owes to a woman whom he has sincerely loved."

I afterwards learned a variety of particulars relating to Madame Fourès; and as she was long attached to the fate of Napoleon, and gave him in adversity proofs of gratitude and interest, I think it best to insert here all that I know of her.

Pauline was born at Carcassone. Her father was a gentleman, but her mother either a chambermaid or cook. The education of the young daughter partook of the mixed rank to which she owed her birth; she received some instruction, and finally went out to work. She was one of the prettiest girls in the town, and perfectly virtuous. My friends M. and Madame de Sales showed her a kindness which her conduct justified, and treated her more like a child of their own than a workwoman by the day, for her conduct was most exemplary.

She recited M. de Sales's verses, and sang with taste, and it was here principally that her beauty acquired her the surname of *Bellilotte.*

The son of a retired merchant named Fourès was charmed by that pretty Hebe face and the fame which attended it; he paid his addresses to her, but as he was far from agreeable she hesitated for some time; an accidental introduction to the table of M. de Sales, to

entertain his guests with her singing, and the impression she was sensible of having made there induced her to consult M. de Sales on the subject of the marriage. "M. Fourès offers me the advantage of a fortune," said she, "moderate, it is true, but independent. I think I will accept him;" and shortly after she married him.

The intended Egyptian expedition was soon announced at Carcassone, and Fourès, who had seen service, willing to answer the national appeal to all the retired officers capable of bearing arms, set out for Toulon, the general *rendezvous*. He tenderly loved his young bride, and made her the companion of his journey, while her adventurous spirit wished for nothing better than to participate all danger and fatigue with her husband. She put on male attire therefore, and they arrived in Egypt; it is not true that Napoleon had seen her in France, or that he had dressed her as a naval aspirant on board the *Orient*, as I have read in a foolish book, whose author has collected together all the most absurd falsehoods respecting Napoleon.[1]

When at Cairo, the general-in-chief was one day riding, followed by a numerous staff, to attend a sort of fair or fête about a league from the town, when the party was detained on the road by a troop of asses, commonly used for the saddle in that country. They were mounted by officers and some of their wives. General Bonaparte, who is well known to have had a quick eye, was struck by a passing glimpse of a female face; yet he pursued his route without a hint of the circumstance.

The next day Madame Fourès received an invitation to dine with General Dupuy, commandant of the city, who had with him a Madame Dupuy, and the invitation was sent in her name as well as his. "It is singular," said Fourès, "that I am not invited with my wife! for I am an officer." He was a lieutenant in the 22d Chasseurs à

[1] This book appeared in 1815, and is entitled *l'Amour et l'Ambition, ou la Vie d'un grand Homme*, par Louis Frederic Reisberg. To give an idea of its contents, it is only necessary to say that the author makes Madame Bonaparte (Josephine) daughter of Louis XV.

Cheval. He, however, allowed his wife to go, strongly recommending her to make it understood that she had a husband, a fact already but too well known. Madame Fourès was most politely received. The dinner-party was select, and everything passed off quietly, and without the smallest indication of what was to follow; but at the moment coffee was about to be served, a great commotion was heard in the house, the folding doors hastily opened, and the general-in-chief appeared. Dupuy made many apologies for being found at table, pressed a cup of coffee upon Napoleon, which he accepted. He was taciturn, and fixed his attention on the young Frenchwoman, who, blushing like crimson, dared not raise her eyes, and grew momentarily more and more dismayed at finding herself so avowedly an object of attention to a man whose great name was already the theme of the world. The general-in-chief refreshed himself with an orange and a cup of coffee, and then took his leave, without having addressed a single word to Madame Fourès, but also without having once taken his eyes off her.

A few days after Fourès was sent for by Berthier. "My dear Fourès," said the chief of the staff, putting into his hands a voluminous packet, "more fortunate than any of us, you are about to revisit France. The general-in-chief has had reports of you which inspire him with such perfect confidence that he sends you to Europe as the bearer of despatches to the Directory. You are to set out within an hour; here is an order to the commander of the port of Alexandria. Adieu, my dear fellow; I wish I were in your place."

"But I must go and apprise my wife, that she may make her preparations," said Fourès, recovering at length from the stupefaction he had been thrown into by a favour which he received with instinctive doubts. He was, however, dissuaded, by unanswerable arguments, from carrying his wife with him; and Berthier affected sympathy with his distress at the necessary separation.

Fourès, amidst his grief, was tolerably self-satisfied; for, inconceivable as were the singular favours which had

sought him out in his obscurity, we all have a reserve of vanity to assist us in comprehending what is incomprehensible; and before he reached his lodging Fourès had discovered within himself many reasons to explain the general's choice. His wife, who understood them rather better, took leave of him, "with a tear in her eye," and the good lieutenant, embarking, sailed for France. At that period it was more easy to embark for France than it was to land there. The English were on the alert, and no sooner was a sail descried on the surface of the ocean than twenty grappling-irons fell pounce upon it, and it was carried—God knows where. Fourès's small vessel shared the common fate of those which left the ports of Egypt; it was taken, and himself searched even to his shirt for the important papers he was supposed to have concealed; but on examining those which his utmost address could not withhold, the English captain found them to contain nothing but well-known particulars which he remembered to have seen ostentatiously published in the *Moniteur*, from a previous despatch that had had the good fortune to escape.

This gentleman, vastly polite and accommodating, inquired of the lieutenant-ambassador where he would choose to be landed. He was himself bound for Mahon; from thence he sailed to the Molucca Islands; thence on a grand tour in the Pacific, or towards the Pole, depending on the instructions he might find at Macao; finally, he would very probably revisit the waters of the Nile; and if M. le Lieutenant preferred a residence on the coast during this little tour, he, a captain in the service of his Britannic Majesty, was quite at his command. Poor Fourès timidly asked if he could not return whence he came. "For," observed he, very judiciously, "now that I am but an empty mail, what end would it answer to absent myself from my wife? Let me return to Cairo." The English captain, who, amongst other circumstantial intelligence from the interior of Egypt, was pretty well acquainted with the affairs of Madame Fourès, and the general-in-chief, landed the good lieutenant according to

his desire, with great politeness and apparent cordiality, and wished him good luck. Fourès hastened to embrace his Bellilotte, but Bellilotte was no longer beautiful for him; he found his lodging deserted, and his affection being sincere the poor fellow's consternation and misery were proportionate. His wife was easily found; she inhabited an hotel close to that of the general; and being persecuted with his entreaties to return, she obtained a divorce pronounced by Commissary-General Sartelon.

Napoleon was much attached to Madame Fourès, who possessed every qualification calculated to attach him,—qualifications still more brilliantly attractive in a distant and barbarous country, where the rest of her sex within reach were of a station and character from whom Bonaparte would not so much as have thought of seeking a companion. In Pauline he found an active and ardent imagination, an affectionate disposition, abundance of native humour, and a mind sufficiently cultivated to have information without pedantry.

Perfectly unaffected and disinterested, she was all tenderness and devotion. Combining with so many attractions a captivating exterior, Bellilotte could not fail of being beloved by a man to whom pretension, affectation, and self-interest were odious in women.

She was as full of fun and gaiety as a girl of twelve, and Napoleon often joked her upon this gaiety, and upon the laughing he had heard in the donkey adventure on the road to Boulack. Her situation threw her into frequent contact with the inferior agents of the commissariat and military treasury, and Bonaparte would often laughingly joke her upon her intimacies with them; but had he believed such things, he would never have mentioned them, even in jest, and she gave him in reality no cause of complaint.

When Napoleon determined on quitting Egypt she alone was apprised of so important a resolution. With much grief she was convinced of the impossibility of following him through the chances of a dangerous journey. "I may be taken," said he, when in tears she petitioned to

attend him, promising to brave every difficulty, a promise she would religiously have observed—"I may be taken by the English; my honour must be dear to you; and what would they say to find a woman at my elbow?" After his departure, Egypt was to her but a vast desert. Napoleon left orders with Kléber to ship off, with as little delay as possible, certain persons whom he named. I have already reported how these orders were executed with respect to my husband and brother-in-law. Poor Bellilotte met with no better fate, and, being a woman, felt it more acutely. Kléber, who in spite of a stature of six feet, and great military talent, was sometimes mean and pitiful in his notions, delighted in the power of tyrannising over a woman who had been the mistress of Bonaparte, and in preventing his friends from joining him; but Desgenettes, ever ready to assist the unhappy, conceiving the distress of Madame Fourès deprived of her defender, and exposed to the vengeance of a man who loved her, and whose jealousy must produce vexatious, perhaps dangerous consequences, came to her assistance, and interposed so effectually with Kléber for the delivery of the passport that Madame Fourès immediately obtained it and sailed for France, where she found her Egyptian friend in circumstances which gave him new claims on her affection. Napoleon was, however, but newly reconciled to Josephine, and was too deeply immersed in serious and important labours to admit of any distraction. Though indifferent to Josephine, his attachment for her had once been sufficient to enable her to replace, in his imagination at least, a connection that might have afforded him happiness. Bellilotte was therefore discarded: from Duroc, who was especially charged with the disposal of her fate, I know the internal struggles which this decision cost Napoleon; but her name was Josephine's most effective weapon in all their domestic quarrels, and she would have allowed him neither peace nor respite had she once learned that Madame Fourès had a house in Paris. Napoleon, anxious above all things to avoid publicity, recommended a house out of town. And Pauline, ever resigned to the

wishes of him she loved, hired or purchased a cottage at Belleville near the Pré-Saint Gervais, where she lived at the time Junot pointed her out to me at the *Comédie.*

Fourès also returned from Egypt, and the divorce pronounced abroad being invalid at home unless confirmed within a limited time, which had now elapsed, he reclaimed his wife, who refused his demand; and long and angry debates arose, which, reaching the ears of the First Consul, he with some harshness ordered the unfortunate wife to marry again. An opportunity offered in the person of M. Ramchouppe, who was enamoured of her, and Bonaparte promised a consulate for the conclusion of the affair. She consulted her old patron, M. de Sales, who was now practising with credit as an advocate at Paris, and who still entertained a warm friendship for Bellilotte as well as for Fourès. She finally determined, contrary to his judgment, to marry M. Ramchouppe, and set out with her new husband for his consulate.

For many years nothing was heard of her; but on learning the captivity of Napoleon the noble and exalted soul of Pauline rose superior to fear and prejudice. She realised part of her remaining property, and sailed from port to port, anxiously watching an opportunity to go to Saint Helena and to attempt the deliverance of him who had ever been dear to her as her best friend, and religiously sacred as personifying the glory of her country.

Her plan was some time organising, and no sooner was it completed than Napoleon's death crushed all her swelling hopes. Vengeance and hatred had been more prompt than attachment and fidelity could execute. Pauline was in Brazil when the news reached her; where she may be now I know not, but in whatever quarter of the globe, should this book meet her eye, I could wish that it may convey to her the expression of my admiration and gratitude for a feeble woman, whose courage and feeling prompted an undertaking which men had not heart enough even to attempt.

CHAPTER LV.

Awakening and nocturnal sally of Junot—The Adjutant Laborde—Chevalier's machine—Accomplices and informers—Attempts against the First Consul's life—Difficult arrest—The madmen—Conspiracies—Secrets imparted to Caffarelli—Lavoisier—Poverty a bad counsellor—The rule and its exceptions—Description of the machine—Maxim of the First Consul—The military family.

SOME days after my marriage I found Junot depressed and abstracted, visiting the prefect of police several times a day, often awakened in the night by an old adjutant called Laborde, who came to make reports, which seemed to be of great importance; he once got up at three o'clock in the morning, dressed himself, and sallied out on foot with this man, although the cold was excessive, and he had been suffering all day with a violent headache, which had entirely deprived him of appetite. But the interests at stake were very dear, and all else was forgotten. At length, on the 7th November, he appeared more calm, and told me that the First Consul had just escaped a danger which must have been followed by the most disastrous consequences; for not only the plan, if executed, must have succeeded, but all the neighbouring inhabitants would have been its victims. This was the infernal machine of Chevalier, a prelude to the conspiracy of the 23d December. Chevalier, whose name is almost the only one connected with this affair, was far from being its sole contriver. Men named Bousquet, Gombaud-Lachaise, Desforge, Guérauld, and a Madame Bucquet, were arrested at the same time, and, with Chevalier, confined in the Temple. This machine, which Chevalier was constructing, was seized in a chamber

which he shared with a man named Veycer, in a house called the house of the Blancs-Manteaux. He had left his former lodging because all the police of Paris were in search of him.

Veycer, his fellow-labourer, was at first his comrade, and afterwards, whether through remorse or by means of seduction, was induced to assist in his arrest. It was apprehended that Chevalier, finding himself lost, might in a moment of despair set fire to the combustibles around him, and blow up with himself the house and all that it contained. Veycer's business was to prevent this; but Chevalier, as was natural to the part he was playing, was extremely suspicious. On retiring to rest he fastened his door with an oaken bar, and had always at hand a pair of excellent and well-loaded pistols; all this his bedfellow was aware of, and not unmindful of his own safety.

On the eve of Chevalier's arrest the progress of his machine was at a stand for want of money; and Bousquet, who appears to have been hitherto the banker of the diabolical enterprise, was equally without funds. Veycer was despatched in quest of money, which, of course, was not difficult to procure, as only six or eight francs were wanted. He brought them late at night, so that nothing could be undertaken till the morning. Chevalier's confidence in his comrade (whose real name was not Veycer, and whom I shall simply call his comrade) was strengthened by this new service, and he slept amidst fusees and cartridges as tranquilly as if surrounded by roses. The comrade had little difficulty in persuading him not to burn a light, so that the room was in perfect darkness, and to this circumstance he owed his safety; for on hearing the first shake of the door by the police agents he sprang forward to remove the bar that opposed them, and Chevalier, perceiving that he was betrayed, fired a pistol, which lodged its contents in the wall, but would not have missed his comrade had there been a light. This arrest took place at two in the morning of the 7th November, a date impressed on my memory by the circumstance that had

my mother's intended ball that evening taken place with so many of those wretches about the town, who went by the name of the *madmen*, and had been agitating for three months past, the probable consequences of their learning that the First Consul was about to spend a part of the night, unguarded, at a private house, where, on entering or returning, his person was so much more accessible than amidst the crowds that surround a public spectacle, could not but make both my mother and myself shudder. The sect called the *Enragés* was composed of the very dregs of the worst days of the Revolution. The cleverest of them, and their ringleader, was one Moses Bayle, formerly a conventionalist, who headed the attempt on the vaults of the Tuileries, opposite the *Vigier* baths, when the first grating yielded; but the second, having a stronger lock, set force at defiance. The same party, under the same leader, attempted to assassinate the First Consul before the affair of Ceracchi and Aréna. This conspiracy, which had been framed almost unknown to the police, so completely were its authors protected by their insignificance, was discovered by an honest man whom they would willingly have made an accomplice; but, revolting at the enormity of the project, he sought out General Caffarelli, aid-de-camp to the First Consul, and revealed to him the whole affair. This man's name owes its preservation chiefly to its similarity to one of great celebrity, Lavoisier. Paris was at this time infested with swarms of pardoned Chouans, and other vagabonds of all descriptions, who conspired against the First Consul's life, not for the sake of liberty, but because so terrible a catastrophe would throw all Paris into confusion, and enable them to repeat the horrors of the 10th of August and 2d of September. But it was the opinion both of Junot and Fouché, who agreed on this point alone, that other heads controlled, and other counsels animated the machinations of which these illiterate and half-armed banditti were made to appear the sole contrivers. Since the First Consul had been in power more than ten obscure conspiracies had been discovered; and he, with the same greatness of

mind which never afterwards deserted him, enjoined the authorities not to divulge them.

"They would lead the nation to suppose that the State is not tranquil, nor must we allow foreigners this momentary triumph; they would easily take advantage of it, and it shall not be."

The First Consul was in the right; the English, for instance, would have sufficiently magnified such attempts, with which they were, no doubt, too well acquainted, yet dared not precede our own journals in the announcement of them.

It is, however, a positive fact that nothing could be more tranquil than the interior of France. The First Consul was idolised—for the word beloved is too feeble—by the entire population of Paris, and his assassins, if known, could not fail of being massacred by the people. Who were the prime movers of all these conspiracies? Ruined men, gamesters; not only destitute of fortune, but overwhelmed with debts, and resolved at any price to acquire a power which they only deemed misplaced in the hands of General Bonaparte, because he was rigorous in the choice of magistrates, ministers, and all the officers of Government. I know there are persons who might be named in refutation of this last assertion; but they are small in number, and the pre-eminent talents of their possessors may supply me with an answer. It is not less a fact, that from his elevation to the Consulate during the happy years that preceded the Empire he employed as far as possible only men of probity and good character. The council of State, the senate, the tribunal, as yet in its infancy, the ministers, the whole national organization, was the work of the First Consul, and proved the truth of my observation.

Under such a Government Demerville, Topino-Lebrun, Ceracchi, Moses Bayle, Chevalier, and their fellows, could have little hope of rising; the course they adopted therefore was merely staking their last rouleau on the chance of power; and it is remarkable that all these conspiracies fell to the ground for want of funds to purchase poniards, pistols, powder, etc.

There are some young heads, and others which, more gray, approach nevertheless nearly to infancy in their ignorance of the deplorable events that marked the progress of our unhappy Revolution, who will question the poverty of these men, and persuade themselves that the poor must, as a corollary, be honest and virtuous; but practical experience teaches us, on the contrary, that in a corrupt community (and I hope we make no pretensions to being otherwise) poverty is so rarely allied to virtue and probity, that the exception, when found, serves but to confirm the rule, which is, that the absolutely poor and wretched are capable of every wickedness; and as a proof, was any man, possessed of the simple means of living, ever known to turn highway robber? he will only pursue this road to eternal perdition for the sake of bread. But in my designation of the poor and wretched I by no means include those who gain their livelihood by persevering labour; such a man is estimable, however mean may be his occupation.

I heard the whole history of Chevalier's affair from the old Adjutant Laborde, who came the next morning to relate it to Junot; and also from Doucet, chief of the staff of Paris. The little machine was brought for Junot's inspection. It was a small cask filled with squibs, and balls containing seven or eight pounds of powder. It was bound at each extremity with two hoops of iron, and near the middle was introduced a gun-barrel, having the trigger strongly attached to the cask with pieces of iron. This machine was to have been placed in the road of the First Consul. Fireworks were to have been thrown in all directions to increase the disorder; while *chevaux-de-frise*, manufactured by a locksmith, who was taken into custody, being placed in the adjacent streets, were to prevent the arrival of troops, and thus give time to men, capable of so diabolical a conception, to commit their meditated crimes.

Junot especially recommended me not to mention this affair to any of my mother's associates; and so well did I obey his instructions that my mother knew nothing of

the matter till the 2d December. I soon, indeed, accustomed myself to hear almost mechanically matters of the utmost importance discussed; a habit that was common to me as well as to all the young wives of my time, whose husbands were continually about the chief of the State, or engaged in highly confidential transactions. The first time that I dined at the Tuileries, I was placed as a bride next to the First Consul; the Duchess de Montebello, then Madame Lannes, was seated on the other side; it was about a week after this discovery; he asked me if I had mentioned it to my mother, I answered, "No, for I was unwilling to give her uneasiness; and besides," added I, "Junot tells me such things must be talked of as little as possible."—"Junot is right," added he; "I myself have recommended it to him. It is now no secret, as beyond a doubt the arrest of Chevalier is pretty generally known; but I do not wish explanations, sought for more from curiosity than interest, by persons so nearly connected with me as Junot." And he added, "As for you, Madame Junot, now that you make a part of the family of my staff, you must *see, hear, and forget* (vous devez *tout voir, tout entendre, et tout oublier*). Have this device engraved on a seal. But I remember that you can keep a secret." He alluded to the affair of Salicetti.

CHAPTER LVI.

Garat, and the ridiculous cravats—Haydn's oratorio—Brilliant assemblage at the Opera—Junot's dinner with Berthier, the 23d December—General security and extraordinary noise—The First Consul at the Opera, and Duroc at the door of my box—The infernal machine—M. Diestrich, aid-de-camp to Vandamme—Return from the Opera—My presence at the Tuileries the evening of the 23d December—Remarkable scenes—Danger of Madame Bonaparte—Involuntary tears—Correct details relative to the infernal machine—Exaggeration of the number of victims—Junot's coachman, and danger avoided—Agreement of Fouché and Junot—Junot's nightmare—My life in danger.

MY mother's health was strikingly improved since my marriage. Contrary to my brother's inclinations, as well as mine, she had called in a new physician, named Vigaroux, the son of a skilful surgeon of Montpellier, and he seemed to work wonders. He engaged to cure her in six months, and she was sure enough relieved from pain. She was handsomer, and her complexion clearer than it had been for ten years before. She dined with me, went to plays, was going about on visits the whole morning, and far from feeling fatigued; indeed, she was the better for all this exertion.

Garat, one of my mother's oldest and most assiduous acquaintances, came one day to entreat our attendance at the Opera on the 23d December to hear Haydn's fine oratorio of the Creation, which he, jointly with Steibelt, had arranged, and in which he was to take a part. My mother, who was passionately fond of good music and of Garat's singing, readily promised a compliance. She was to sit in my box; and as Junot dined with Berthier, the new Minister of War, it was settled that I should dine

with her ready dressed, and Junot would join us after dinner.

My toilet completed for the evening I entered the carriage with my brother-in-law, and we found my mother beautiful, gay, and enchanting. She was splendidly dressed in black velvet and diamonds, and no one would have supposed her of the age of sixty-two.

We dined early; my mother ordered her horses while we took coffee, and we set out immediately afterwards. It was seven when we arrived at the Opera. The house was crowded, and being well lighted, and the ladies in full dress, the spectacle was very brilliant.

We distinguished Garat with his opera-glass in his hand earnestly surveying the boxes to recognise his acquaintances; and though eight o'clock at night he sought to catch a gleam of *Aurora*.[1] He was more ridiculously dressed than usual; no very easy matter. His coat collar stood higher than his head, and his rather monkeyish face was difficult to discern between ells of muslin by way of cravat below, and a forest of curls above.

The instruments were tuned, and this immense orchestra, more numerous than I had ever seen it before, was preparing to treat our oral faculties with Haydn's *chef-d'œuvre*, more perfectly executed than he had ever the gratification of hearing it himself.[2]

Junot found my mother and me in high spirits, occupied in looking round this magnificent house, and returning the friendly and smiling salutations of our acquaintance. He was himself in a peculiar state of

[1] Garat was particularly intimate with Madame Aurora B——, and was always in company with her and her sister. Both parties frequented Talleyrand's house, and the valet-de-chambre, accustomed to announce them together, would cry with a loud voice, *Mesdames de B—— et M. Garat.* But all things change in this world: so that later these ladies and M. Garat were announced separately; but the habitude was such that more than two years afterwards, Courtiade, when ushering in the two sisters, still called out "*Mesdames de B—— et M. Garat.*"

[2] Haydn was leader of the music at the chapel of Prince Esterhazy at Vienna; he wished much to visit Paris, but the Prince refused him permission to travel.

mind. Berthier had been repeating to him a conversation he had held with the First Consul respecting Junot; and his words were so full of kindness and friendship that Junot was sensibly affected, and his eyes watered, while happiness played in smiles on his lips.

Scarcely were thirty bars of the oratorio played before a violent explosion was heard like the report of a cannon.

"What means that?" said Junot with emotion. He opened the box door, and looked about for one of his officers or aides-de-camp. "It is strange!" said he. "How can the guns be fired at this hour? Besides, I should have known it! Give me my hat," said he to my brother, "I will go and see what it is." Instantly Chevalier's machine occurred to me, and I seized the flaps of Junot's coat, but he looked angrily at me, and impatiently snatched it from my grasp. At this moment the door of the First Consul's box opened and himself appeared, with General Lannes, Berthier, and Duroc.

He smilingly saluted the immense crowds, who mingled almost screams of love with their acclamations. Madame Bonaparte followed in a few seconds, accompanied by Colonel Rapp, Madame Murat, who was near her confinement, and Mademoiselle Beauharnais. Junot was re-entering the box to convince himself of the First Consul's serenity, which I had just remarked upon, when Duroc presented himself with a discomposed countenance, and an air of wildness.

He spoke in whispers to Junot, and we heard nothing of his communication; but at night Junot repeated it to me. "I love Duroc; he is almost as much attached to the First Consul as Marmont and myself."

Duroc's words sufficiently explained the disturbed condition in which he appeared.

"The First Consul has just escaped death," said he hastily to Junot; "go to him, he wishes to speak to you, but be calm. It is impossible the event should remain unknown here a quarter of an hour; but he wishes to avoid being himself the means of spreading such intelli-

gence: so, come with me, and let me lean on your arm, for I tremble all over. My first battle agitated me less."

During the short conference of the two friends the oratorio had commenced; but the fine voices of Mesdames Branchu and Walbourne, and that of Garat, could not absorb the attention of the audience. All eyes were turned towards the First Consul, and he alone at this moment occupied two thousand hearts. As I have before observed, I had said nothing to my mother of Chevalier's infernal machine; but my brother-in-law knew the whole affair, and I whispered a word in his ear, to despatch him in search of news. I felt a presentiment of some misfortune. The moment Duroc spoke to Junot the latter turned pale as a spectre, and I perceived him raise his hand to his forehead with a gesture of surprise and despair; but, being unwilling to disturb my mother and the people in the adjoining boxes, I contented myself with whispering to Junot for intelligence. But before his return we had heard all. A low murmur began to spread from the stage to the orchestra, the pit, and the boxes. "The First Consul has just been attacked in the Rue Saint Nicaise."[1]

The truth soon circulated throughout the theatre, when simultaneously, and as it were by an electric shock, one unanimous acclamation was heard; one universal glance seemed to shield Napoleon with protecting love. What I here relate I was eye-witness to; more than two-thirds of those who attended the Opera on that evening are probably yet living in Paris; it may be they dare not be the first to declare the events of that moment; but I appeal to them, let them answer whether I retrace not with fidelity the feelings of the audience. How tumultuous was the agitation which preceded the burst of national resentment! for in the first quarter of an hour the nation was represented by that crowd, whose indignation against so foul

[1] This street no longer exists; and the Opera-house was destroyed after the assassination of the Duc de Berri, to make room for the chapel intended to be erected in commemoration of this last murderous act; the chapel was nearly finished, but has, since the revolution of 1830, been pulled down, and the materials sold.

an attempt no words are capable of expressing. Women were seen choking with sobs, men trembling with rage; all united heart and hand to prove that in such circumstances no political differences can create a difference in the code of honour. Meanwhile I was engaged in observing the First Consul's box, which, being immediately below me, enabled me to see and hear nearly all that passed in it. He was calm, and appeared only warmly affected when the general murmur conveyed to his ear any strong expression of the public feeling. Madame Bonaparte was not equally mistress of her feelings. Her whole frame was disordered; even her attitude, always so graceful, was no longer her own. She seemed to tremble, and to be desirous of sheltering herself under her shawl—the very shawl which had saved her life. She wept: notwithstanding all her efforts to repress her tears, they were seen trickling down her pale cheeks, and when she looked towards the First Consul her shivering fit returned. Her daughter too was much disturbed. As for Madame Murat, the character of the family shone in her demeanour; although her situation might have excused the display of anxiety and distress so natural in the sister of the First Consul, she was, throughout this trying evening, perfectly composed.

Junot, having received the orders of the First Consul, returned to desire we would not wait for him, and immediately left us to enter upon his duty. The prefect of police, whose box was next to mine, had long since quitted it and hastened to the Prefecture. When Junot was gone, my mother, who was now acquainted with the whole affair, told me that a young man of a military appearance, in the box beside me, had just told the ladies who occupied it that the conspirators had at first intended to lay their train at the door of the Opera, in which case the entire theatre would have been blown up; and she desired me to look at him, and tell her whether he were deserving of credit. It was M. Diestrich, aid-de-camp to General Vandamme, and the ladies in the box were his mother and sister. I had once seen him at my own house on Junot's reception-days, and had met him two days before at General

Mortier's. I begged him to tell me whether there was any new misfortune to be dreaded. "It is difficult," said he, "to answer that question. Death has been averted from the whole assemblage within these walls only by the observance of a general regulation that no carriage of any description shall be suffered to remain at the door of a theatre the first night of a new piece. But," added M. Diestrich, lowering his voice, "none of the authors of this infamous crime are yet arrested; who can answer that a second blow may not be prepared against the First Consul at the moment of his leaving the theatre, the first having failed? As for myself, I am come to fetch my mother and sister, and when I have seen them safely home I shall return, for the arm of a man is always necessary in a tumult." — "I will go too," said my mother, "this gentleman is perfectly right; give me my shawl, put on your own and let us go;" and she continued urging my departure, and even wrapped me in my furs. My partiality for General Bonaparte, and especially that passion for his glory which made me as sensitive to his triumphs as if he had been my brother; that enthusiasm which induced me to consider the interests of France and Napoleon as identified, had frequently incurred my mother's reproaches. This evening she had seen me weep, and knew that I was really distressed, but did not fully comprehend the object of my present anxiety. My tears, I will not deny, were called forth by horror at a crime of such enormity as would condemn its perpetrators to the execration of all succeeding ages; but at that moment I was in a state of violent perturbation at the thought that Junot was encountering unknown dangers, so much the more alarming that the wretches who were thus resolutely bent on the First Consul's destruction could only reach him by the sacrifice of his most faithful adherents. This idea tortured me. I knew that my mother would go, but for myself I would fain know Junot's proceedings and keep him in sight. I thought the First Consul's side his most probable station at such a moment. It was not his duty to be running through the

narrow alleys of Paris hunting the conspirators from their lurking-places, and I might reasonably suppose he would not be far from the Opera-house. While I lingered, ruminating on these reflections, Junot opened the box-door, and hastily said: "Go with your mother; after setting her down, borrow her carriage to convey you to Madame Bonaparte's; I shall be there, and will take you home;" and away he ran. In spite of the excessive cold he was covered with perspiration.

My brother-in-law accompanied us, and having set down my mother we proceeded to the Tuileries. The First Consul was returned from the Opera, and everything appeared as calm as if nothing had happened; but in the salon things wore a different aspect. Several of the authorities were assembled, the ministers, the consuls, the Commandant of Paris, General Mortier, commandant of the Division, etc. The First Consul, who had hitherto appeared indifferent to all the attempts against him, showed this time no indulgence, and he had good reason. Madame Bonaparte was quite overpowered; she cried incessantly. Independently of the danger the First Consul had so narrowly escaped, she had herself nearly fallen a victim to the explosion. As she was stepping into the carriage, Rapp, who was not usually so observant of the perfect agreement of colours in a lady's dress, observed to her that her shawl neither matched her gown nor her jewels. Her perfect elegance in the adjustment of all the accessories of the toilet is well known, and she returned to repair the oversight. Scarcely did it detain her three minutes, yet these sufficed for separating her carriage from that of the First Consul, which it was to have followed close. This delay saved her. The explosion took place just as Madame Bonaparte's carriage reached the Carrousel: its windows were broken, and pieces of the glass fell on the neck and shoulders of Mademoiselle Beauharnais, who sat on the front seat of the carriage, and her shawl did not defend her from some slight wounds. I cannot adequately describe the impression which this outrage created throughout France: to Bonaparte it afforded the

conviction that he might demand anything of the people by whom he was beloved to such excess. I saw, and have still before me, the daily reports made by the military police to Junot. These reports were not designed for public inspection, but they contained proofs of attachment and national devotion, the abuse of which may imply in some degree a criminality in Napoleon.

It is well known that the barrel containing the powder and charge (and which resembled those borne by the water carriers) was placed on a crazy little cart, drawn by a mare, and so stationed as to impede the road. It was intended, while in the act of removal by the guards, to explode by internal machinery, and destroy everything within reach. It was afterwards said that the rapidity of his carriage alone had saved the First Consul, and no doubt this circumstance had its share in his deliverance; but the real cause of it was the result of mere chance. The piquet of chasseurs escorting the First Consul preceded and followed the carriage. One of the foremost, perceiving that an old cart obstructed the way, called to the driver to get on one side; but seeing no one (for Saint Régent, who lighted the train, was concealed behind a palisade),[1] he struck the mare smartly on the haunches with the flat of his sabre, which set her in motion, and advancing three or four steps she seems to have deranged the packthread, which, by opening a valve, was to admit air and cause the explosion. The consequent delay was but momentary, yet it sufficed to ensure the safety of the First Consul, whose carriage had meanwhile turned through the Rue de Malte into the Rue Richelieu instead of passing through the Rue Saint Nicaise, where the machine was. The mare was killed, but without any external

[1] At the period of this tragic event the Place du Carrousel and the adjacent streets were totally different to what we see them now; improvements were then going on, and palisades of lofty boards were at every corner. It was behind one of these palisades that the poor little ignorant chimney-sweep had hidden himself in order to set fire to the train of powder; his name was Saint Régent. By the explosion of the machine he received some violent contusions, and was thrown across the street: the surgeon who picked him up immediately afterwards and dressed his wounds was arrested, and suspected of being a party concerned in the infernal attempt.

mark of injury, so that a description of her was everywhere placarded, and the body deposited at the Prefecture of Police in order that the public might see and examine it, and perhaps be able to say to whom she formerly belonged.

Such was the violence of the explosion, so terrible the impulsion, that a part of the wheel, and one of the iron bands that encircled the cask, darting across the intervening space from the Rue de Malte to the Hôtel d'Elbœuf, and unarrested even by the lofty height of that hotel, was hurled some distance beyond it.

Curiosity proved fatal to many inhabitants of the Rues Saint Nicaise and de Malte. Madame Léger, mistress of the Café Apollo, at the corner of the two streets, running to the door, according to her custom, whenever the First Consul was to be seen passing, had both her breasts carried off by one of the hoops of the barrel, and survived but three days.

One of the waiters at the same café was killed, and the other wounded. The number of the victims has been much exaggerated. I have proofs that on that day the deaths did not exceed nine: they may, including the consequences, have afterwards amounted to twenty-nine or thirty. Great, no doubt; but far less frightful than if we had had to deplore the loss of two thousand people, as would have been the case had not the sentinel peremptorily resisted the placing of the cart at the door of the Opera-house.

Never, perhaps, was Napoleon a more interesting object of observation than during the hours immediately succeeding this catastrophe.

It was not till my return home at night that I was informed of Junot's share in the danger. On his road to the Opera from the Ministry of War, which was then at the Hôtel d'Avray, Rue de Lille, passing under the arch of the Carrousel, he recollected that it was only seven, and the First Consul would not have set out. Desirous, therefore, of expressing to him the gratitude with which his heart was overflowing, he ordered his coachman to

stop at the Tuileries; but the restiveness of his young and spirited horses (we drove at that time the finest in Paris) frustrated this scheme. They were going with tremendous rapidity, and the coachman found it impossible to stop them till it became necessary to have made a very awkward turn, and to have again passed a narrow part of the street. Junot, therefore, with some signs of impatience, relinquished his design, and again gave the word "to the Opera." Had he alighted at the Tuileries, Napoleon's carriage being full,[1] he must have followed in his own; and the train of guards, the last of whom had his horse killed, would most certainly have been blown up. No one, however, appeared sensible of the danger he had escaped but myself and the coachman, who for more than a year could not pass the Place du Carrousel without a shudder.

All the authorities, the corporations, the tribunals,—everything that could call itself constituted, or wore the appearance of a body,—congratulated the First Consul and entreated him as a favour to pay more attention to his personal safety. The council of State, with Boulay de la Meurthe at the head of its deputation, demanded especially that he would take measures for the maintenance of public order. But the most remarkable address was that of the city of Paris. This unfortunate city saw her interests at stake, exposed as she was to become the victim of a few obscure miscreants, who cared not if, in the accomplishment of their own criminal views, they brought destruction on some thousands of unoffending citizens.

It was Etienne Majean, secretary-general of the department of the Seine, at the head of the mayors and of the general council, who spoke, instead of Frochot, then prefect, who was too seriously ill to exercise his functions. Contemporary memoirs have made the prefect present the mayors to the First Consul, and have quoted his speech on the occasion. The question may

[1] Lauriston, aid-de-camp on duty; Lannes, commanding the guards; and Berthier, Minister of War, were all three with Napoleon.

or may not be indifferent; but knowing the truth, I report it.

The next day, 2d of December, the agitation of Paris was extreme. The heinous nature of the plot was known overnight, but its details were not generally understood till the morning; and I cannot too often repeat, that the indignation they excited was universal, and the interest manifested for the First Consul beyond expression.

It may be well imagined that all the authorities, civil and military, were at once in a state of activity, requiring no other stimulation.

Opinions differed upon the direction the researches should take. Junot and Fouché, who did not usually agree on police measures, could not convert the First Consul to their persuasion that the actuating spring of all these frequent atrocities had its pivot at once in France, and at a distance from it. Napoleon was of a different opinion. "They are the work," he said, "of those same *Enragés*, who embrace in their number a multitude of Septembrisers;" and nothing could shake this idea. Yet it was notorious that these men were but the outcasts of a party, and the cat's-paws of their secret instigators.

"A handful of wretches, who have calumniated Liberty by the crimes they have committed in her name; these are the guilty parties," said the First Consul. Dubois would not contradict him, for it was evident he thought with Junot and Fouché. Fouché replied, "These are fellows incapable of conceiving. They execute as the horse did who drew the machine, but can go no farther. It would be useless were I to run after these men of the Abbaye-aux-Bois.[1] Only leave me time, and I will unravel many things."

For two days Junot scarcely allowed himself an instant's repose. He would not entrust to subalterns a commission so important as the pursuit of the agents in

[1] The Abbaye-aux-Bois, situated in the Faubourg Saint Germains, was the principal place for the meetings of the conspirators at that time: it is now a retreat for ladies of small income.

so atrocious an enterprise. He rose almost before daybreak, and from the headquarters of the garrison directed himself everything that fell under his jurisdiction. The activity, intelligence, and honourable devotedness of his coadjutor M. Doucet, chief adjutant-general of the garrison, cannot be too highly praised.

At ten o'clock on the evening of the 5th Junot came home, overcome with fatigue, and though he had promised to fetch me from my mother's could not rally his faculties from the drowsiness which oppressed them.

On my arrival, my femme-de-chambre told me he was gone to bed, and had requested I would wish him good-night. Accordingly I entered my chamber, and finding him in a deep sleep, leaned over him, and said, "What! already asleep?" His nights, generally restless, were at this anxious period disturbed by frightful dreams; and at the moment I spoke he was dreaming that he was in the cabinet of the First Consul, which was filled with conspirators, one of whom was in the act of firing a machine. My words had partly roused him, and the fire-light favouring the illusion of his dream, he mistook me for the assassin and with a furious kick drove me to the farther extremity of the room. My cries awakened him, and becoming sensible who had been the object of his attack he became much agitated.

CHAPTER LVII.

My visits to the Tuileries after the 2d of December—Conversation with the First Consul—Inutility of an additional victim—Bonaparte's opinion of my mother's drawing-room—His condemnation of the emigrants—M. Roger de Damas, term of comparison in bravery—The horse and the cloak—Madame Murat at the Hôtel de Brionne—Promenade to Villiers—M. Baudelocque and Madame Frangeau—We are not rich—The First Consul's opinion of the contrivers of the infernal machine—The Republicans and the *Enragés*—Remarkable scene at Malmaison—Animated discussion between Bonaparte and Fouché—Enumeration of contemporary crimes—Madame Bonaparte, and the conciliatrice rejected—Continuation and conclusion of a long discussion between Fouché and the First Consul—*The Turk and the French soldier*—Metge and his arrest—The tribune Duveyrier—Special tribunal—Portalis at Malmaison—The preamble of the Civil Code—Junot's papers.

IMMEDIATELY after the explosion of the infernal machine we were more than commonly assiduous in our attendance at the Tuileries; my mother herself pressed it upon me, and often, when desirous of my company, would sacrifice it to send me to the palace. "Be very particular," said she, "to express to General Bonaparte the distress which this horrible affair has occasioned me. No set speeches, such as you would address to a tribunal or a council of State, but depict in its true colours all that I suffered on the evening and night of the 2d of December."

It was easy for my mother to talk of what displeased her in the First Consul; but she had watched his growth from childhood to maturity, and nature overpowered that petty rancour to which the superior mind and generous soul of my mother would never have given admission, but to disguise the just dignity of offended friendship. She was attached to Napoleon; more than once she repented her severity towards one whom she loved as the son of one

of her dearest friends. The attempt of the assassination made her shudder; she wept violently on her return home, and in the night had a violent access of fever, which made her very ill for two days.

When I acquitted myself of her commission to the First Consul, his answer was of a nature to have confounded any one less acquainted with his character than I was.[1] He looked me steadily in the face; fixed on me that piercing and fiery eye, which, by its quick and earnest expression, neutralised those it encountered, and desired me to repeat my mother's message.

"I have had the honour, general, of expressing to you, in my mother's name, the lively interest she felt in the incidents of the 2d. She hopes you do not doubt her sincerity."

"Yet she ran away, and you too, before the end of the oratorio."

I made no reply; but looked at General Bonaparte with an expression which he probably interpreted literally; for he added, withdrawing his gaze from me, and turning towards the window, although it was night, and nothing could be seen in the palace court, "To be sure it would have availed nothing towards my safety, had any peril awaited me, that one more victim should have exposed herself to it."

"Let me add, general, that in the eyes of my mother it was her daughter who was in danger; in mine, it was my mother. We mutually owed regard to each other's safety; for myself, I can say nothing approaching to exaggeration when I affirm that I left the Opera with the greatest reluctance; for I knew that Junot must partake the danger that threatened his general, and this idea was painful to me; but I could not suffer my mother to abide the hazard without being in some degree criminal."

"Yes, yes; undoubtedly, undoubtedly," answered the First Consul, with inflection of voice it would be impos-

[1] It was at one of the quintidian dinners after the attempt,—I think the 15th; for I am certain it was not the 5th following.

sible to describe; "I am altogether ridiculous to have used such an inadvertent expression, for you must call it so; I know in your mother's society everything is acceptable that may make me appear in an unfavourable light."

"General," replied I, much hurt that he persisted in the belief that my mother's drawing-room was a focus for the dissemination of hatred against him, "how can I convince you? It can be accomplished only by one means, and that is in the power of God alone; it is, that the accent of truth may reach your heart. I have much hope in that truth which cannot be feigned. I have the honour to tell you, Citizen Consul, that never has a word to your prejudice been uttered in my mother's drawing-room but either herself or my brother has instantly assumed the prerogative of their own house to impose silence on the holders of language which my mother's friendship for you, and for all your family, would interdict, even though it were the language of truth; for the friendship of my mother," proceeded I, with warmth, and almost angry, "is not of that commonplace species that may be lightly sacrificed to complaisance."

"Ah!" said the First Consul; "you admit, then, that persons inimical to me are received into your mother's drawing-room?"

"I have spoken with frankness, general, and shall continue to do so. Unquestionably, among my mother's acquaintances are some who are unfriendly to the present Government; I pretend neither to blame nor absolve them. I know that they are suffering the consequences of a long exile, that their property is confiscated, that most of them are in indigence, that many still groan under the ban which has been fulminated against them; but all these evils are not ascribable to you, and to resent them upon you would be equally unjust and absurd. But on the other hand, I believe also——" I stopped, and half smiling, looked at the First Consul, who continued my sentence,—"that I should be unjust in my turn, if I obliged them to cry, *Vive la République!* Is not that your meaning, Madame Junot? But if they

do not like that word, why do they return to France? Who recalls them? They are not wanted in any branch of the administration. Fouché and Chaptal will be quite as good ministers as M. le Comte d'Entraigues, and Junot and Lannes will command my soldiers as well as M. Roger de Damas, brave as he is."[1]

"But, general," answered I, "is not our native soil the property of all her children? Cannot a Frenchman return home without the inducement of a place? Is there not an attraction infinitely more powerful? I know there is, by the experience my own family presents; my uncle, M. Comnène, is returned to France, to live in peace and in the hope of a better futurity. And he certainly did not want confidence in your generosity, for he re-entered France without a passport, without even an encouraging word; and as he was far from expecting to find his niece the bride of one of your generals, he reckoned only on the magnanimity of the Government towards a man who surrenders himself."

"Your uncle does not like me, and I may add he does not like the Republic; besides, he emigrated, and I consider all emigrants in the light of parricides. Nevertheless, I have complied with Junot's demands in favour of M. de Comnène; for," added he, "Madame Permon carefully avoids presenting a petition to me, even in favour of her brother."

This was true; my mother had said, "If he be so disposed, he will do it for Junot; and if not, what good can my interference effect?"

[1] Whenever the bravery of the emigrants was Napoleon's topic, M. Roger de Damas was always the example. He related a certain story, which I never heard but from him, about the head of a horse enveloped in a cloak, and a leap into the sea, horse and rider; Quiberon was the theatre. But as it was neither easy to follow Bonaparte in his narrative, nor to extract from him a repetition, I never very exactly understood the particulars of this anecdote. All that I could gather from it was, that M. Roger de Damas, seeing himself on the point of being taken, had wrapped his horse's head in his cloak, that the animal might not be sensible of his danger, and striking the spurs into his sides had made him leap into the sea. I made inquiries of a person who had served in Condé's army, and he assured me the circumstance was true, but had not happened at Quiberon. I give it as I heard it, and that was from Napoleon.

My mother was, however, mistaken; the general would never have refused to Madame Permon what the First Consul of the Republic might perhaps have thought it inconsistent with his duty to grant to General Junot.

I remember that the same day the First Consul talked to me of all my family; inquired whether my grandmother was still living; what was become of my uncle, the Abbé de Comnène; he also spoke of my brother, and his friendly intentions towards him. Junot's relations were not mentioned; he spoke only of my own.

As I have before said, I went often to Madame Bonaparte; Madame Murat, who was every moment expecting her confinement, was also a frequent visitor, and I never met her without pleasure. She was unaffected, a dutiful daughter, a fond wife, and every way interesting.

One day I visited her at the Hôtel de Brionne,[1] where she was then living; she occupied the ground floor, and M. Benezeck, with all his family, the first. I found her getting into her carriage for a ride to Villiers (Neuilly), which the First Consul had just given her, and she proposed my accompanying her, to which I acceded, and we set out, having the precaution to take Madame Frangeau with us, lest an accident should befall her patient by the road.

Madame Frangeau was the favourite of Baudelocque, and could recount the minutiæ of the youth, maturity, and declining age of her patron, with commentaries and additions which each recital magnified by half; will not the simple mention of her name recall to the Queen of Naples, the Queen of Holland, the Duchesse de Frioul, and to all the young mothers of that day, who like myself were subjected to her six weeks' thraldom, her gown of the fashion of the regency, and her whimsically antiquated head-dress, oddly contrasted with finery in the style of 1800?

This little ride to Villiers dwells on my mind, because

[1] This house has since been pulled down. It was situated in the old court of the Tuileries, opposite the entrance leading to the Pont Royal. Maret occupied it after Murat.

so excessive was our mirth at Madame Frangeau's stories that at one moment I had fears for Caroline. She, however, thought not of accidents; she was better engaged in devouring ten or twelve large bunches of grapes and two rolls à la Duchesse, which Madame Frangeau had ordered to be put into the carriage. I never saw such an appetite!

"Will you have some?" said she; recollecting at last that all the way from the barriers she had been eating without a companion. But I was just entering on a situation which with her was drawing to a close; I could eat nothing, and was subject to perpetual sickness.

After driving round the park of Villiers, and laying in a fresh stock of provisions (for the basket was emptied), we returned home. "The First Consul, in the gift of this country-seat, has been most generous to us," said Caroline; "we are not rich, and if my brother had not added the means of furnishing and supporting the house it had been useless to us." In aftertimes, when Murat, returning from Italy, undertook the government of Paris on Junot's departure for Arras, no impossibility of this nature prevented him furnishing and inhabiting the Hôtel de Thelusson.

After the explosion of the infernal machine, all France displayed the most lively interest towards the First Consul; it would be difficult to sum up the unanimous concurrence of testimonials of affection. From all the provinces, from all parts of the Republic, arrived addresses, prayers, and above all recommendations, sometimes harshly worded, that the First Consul should at length adopt measures of personal safety. One cry expressed the universal meaning: *it is the interest of France.*

Our evenings, even after the play if it were not too late, were spent at Madame Bonaparte's. There we enjoyed the happiness of meeting the First Consul.

His conversation, always attractive by its depth of thought, and that air of originality which reflected from his rich and brilliant imagination, acquired increased interest from the consciousness that at such a moment

he could give vent only to ideas of the most direct influence. For this reason I seldom missed the quintidian dinners. In spite of crowd, noise, and bustle, it was easy to hear the conversation of the First Consul with all the men of talent and learning of France. The most profound civilians, the ablest financiers, the most subtle diplomatists, thronged around to hear him, and appeared to be rather taking lessons from him than imparting their knowledge to a young man, whose palè complexion bore witness to watchings and fatigues far exceeding theirs, though the superiority of years was greatly on their side. For a just appreciation of the First Consul's character, he should have been listened to at Malmaison, or in Madame Bonaparte's salon at Paris; but never was he so interesting as at the period I have just sketched, imperfectly indeed, considering the strong and vigorous colouring that should be diffused over such distant reminiscences, when designed for eyes which cannot by the aid of personal recollection fill up the feeble outlines of the picture. But my pencil is guided by conviction, and this is much in painting.

We know the First Consul was persuaded the blow had been struck by the Jacobins, or rather by a class of wretches usurping the name of republicans, and meriting only that of *Enragés*, which the police had given them. In fact, neither Thibeaudeau, Daunou, Grégoire, Boissy d'Anglas, nor any who avowed their republican principles before the Consulate, were to be found in their ranks. They were obscure rapscallions, instruments of crime stained with blood, the refuse of our fatal epochs of 1793 and 1794. These men, dissatisfied with the return of order, as represented in several reports from the prefect of police for Fructidor and Vendémiaire of the year IX., conspired for the overthrow of the restorative Government, under which they could not hope for the revival of anarchy. There was amongst them more than one Babœuf, and the conspiracy of the Camp de Grenelle was every day renewed around the First Consul. But he himself was unjust when he said in the council of

State, "All these evils are the work of the revolutionists; of the Septembrisers."

For a long time he was inconvertible. I remember one day, in a conversation at Malmaison, he maintained his opinion against Fouché, Junot, Cambacérès, and several others. The police had found a clue to the villainy of the machine, and Fouché already exulted; his triumph was complete when, having traced it home, the conspirators were arrested, tried and convicted, and proved to be Chouan chiefs, sent up to Paris by Georges to strike the blow. The First Consul argued good-humouredly, it is true; yet his obstinate contrariety disturbed even the habitual sallow calmness of Cambacérès; he alone was as tranquil as if the question no way affected his life; at one moment only he grew angry.

Fouché asserted, not without reason, that La Vendée, though apparently pacified, still nourished the elements of fire; that insurgent bands occupied all the roads, and that Brittany was uninhabitable.

"Parbleu!" said the First Cousul, with warmth, "why do you talk of La Vendée and Brittany? You! the minister of police! who well know the state both of the north and south of France; you come and talk of La Vendée as the central point towards which it seems all the attention, all the solicitude of the Government, should be directed. What is the news from the right bank of the Rhine? Was he a Vendean, that bandit chief, who committed a robbery of 60,000 francs by force of arms in Germinal last, in the very heart of France, in the department of the Ourthe? Were those men Vendeans, again, who have just been taken at Chateaudun? They are deserters led by a woman in man's attire. In the department of Gard, you know that from the month of Germinal to the 10th Nivose, sixty-eight brigands have been arrested. In the Sarre, what do you call that band of Shindareen robbers? In Aveyron, in the Lower Alps, you hear every day of new arrests. What happened only the day before yesterday on the Rouen road? I hope you do not call that an unknown corner? Well, here

the diligence is attacked by eight brigands in spite of an escort of four men commanded by a sergeant seated on the imperial. Are these, again, Vendeans?"

The First Consul was almost in a passion. Fouché, who was not easily discomfited, looked at him, very respectfully no doubt, but nevertheless with an expression that would have exasperated me had I been the First Consul.

"I have the honour to observe, general," said he, "that the brigands who stopped the diligence from Rouen were no other than Chouans, who are themselves only Vendeans in disguise. When the diligence was stopped, the first proceeding, even before firing, was to demand the funds belonging to the Republic, and this you well know is precisely the prescribed plan among the western brigands. Hunted and entrapped, as it were, by General Bernadotte, they are driven this way; they are Chouans, I maintain it."

"And I repeat to you, Citizen Minister of the General Police, that you are mistaken; or rather you would have us believe you are mistaken." At this moment Madame Bonaparte, who was tenderly attached to Fouché, and deeply interested in his behalf, came up behind Bonaparte, and passed her hand through his arm; but the First Consul, gently disengaging his arm from his wife's pressure, said to her, without loss of temper but rather peremptorily, "Pray, Josephine, do not interrupt me when I am talking of serious matters."

I shall never forget the disconcerted appearance of Madame Bonaparte as she slunk back to her seat without even thinking of a reply.

"Yes, Citizen Minister," resumed the First Consul, "I repeat distinctly that you are mistaken when you pretend that the domestic poison with which the Republic is unhappily infected has any other origin than that vast conspiracy of robbery and crime, the machinations of a set of miscreants who belong to no party, and would disgrace any which might adopt them; but who, ever ready to sell their strength, have for the last fifteen

years been eagerly intent on seizing an opportunity of the smallest disturbance to augment and profit by it. Do you believe that the cut-throats of the 2d and 3d of September, or that the executioners of the republican marriages at Nantes, or the men who filled the ditches of Avignon with corpses, the assassins of the prisoners at Versailles, those wretches who for two years waded ankle deep in blood, signing decrees of death against the aged, such as the Abbess of Montmartre at ninety,[1] or young victims of sixteen, such as the maids of Verdun? Do you believe, sir," and he advanced a pace or two nearer to Fouché—"Do you believe that all these men love liberty and the Republic? Can you answer YES? If you do, I for my part shall say NO. I tell you that they are men determined on licentiousness—men who, on the very eve of the massacres I have enumerated, had not wherewith to pay for a loaf, and six months afterwards were living in opulence; because they could, without a symptom of remorse, wear the clothing and sleep in the beds of their victims. You will tell me, perhaps, that some amongst them are still poor: it may be so; but for the most part they have long feasted on bread steeped in blood. I know what I know," added he, shaking his head.

Fouché grew even paler than usual, and had long been visibly desirous of answering the First Consul. When Napoleon turned to the fire and began poking it, according to his custom, Fouché said, in a voice tremulous with passion, although his words were deliberate:

"But, general, you will permit me to tell you that all the sanguinary horrors of the revolution were not com-

[1] This was Madame de Montmorency, who was so bent with age that the inhuman executioner could not perform his office without first straightening her body by force.

This unfortunate lady was both blind and deaf; when interrogated, Fouquier Tinville was obliged to scream to her, as she had been deprived of her ear-trumpet, and failing with all his exertions, to make himself heard, she was condemned for having *conspiré sourdement* (conspired privately or *deafly*). When she was in the cart, and breathed the fresh air, she sang with a faint voice the "*Salve Regina*," believing herself restored to liberty.

mitted by the *Jacobins*, as you call them. You are plainly ignorant of the tragedies of Tarrascon, Beaucaire, Marseilles, and so many other southern towns, theatres of the illustrious deeds of Jesuits and their colleagues; in short, of the royalist assassinations."

The First Consul was still stooping forward, and knocking about a poor log; but at the last words of Fouché he raised himself hastily, and returning with the same precipitation was instantly beside the minister.

"Eh! pardieu! what is that you have just cited? You give me a new advantage; this is the very thing I told you an hour ago. These monsters in human shape, who tuck up the sleeves of their shirts, if they have any, while they cut off heads or throw people into the water, would throw them into an auto-da-fé of the Spanish Inquisition, if the grand inquisitor's service was more profitable than their pillage. Parbleu! I know there were royalist assassinations. I might say they were but reprisals, and that the scenes of Avignon, the massacre of many of whom, young as I then was, I intimately knew, and whose morality I can warrant, might excuse the subsequent excesses; but no, I will not say so, nothing can authorise cruelty, nothing can render crime legitimate. It was not to our glorious revolution that these atrocities owed their birth. All the horrors of 1793 cannot tarnish the dazzling whiteness of her robe, when, led by Liberty, or rather holding her by the hand as a sister, she came in 1789 to deliver us from our grievous bondage. Men of bad faith and enemies of the revolution can alone confound the events of different periods. All must have their due. But only one opinion can be entertained of murderers and shedders of blood. France has had enough of this *régime*, and anarchy is decidedly held in horror. We must put a stop to the *brigandages* which desolate the interior of the Republic. They are the seedlings of our fatal epochs. Public liberty is menaced, and even already attacked in her most valuable bulwarks. Each member of the great family called society is at every instant deprived of the

means of existence. Safety is but a name, and the most inoffensive being knows not, on retiring to rest, whether he may breakfast in his own house in the morning. The good Clément de Ris is an instance. Such things are passing under a system of government which aims at tranquillity and the return of order. All this must come to an end. I know it was the Directory which prepared for us so sorrowful an inheritance by its detestable organisation of the provinces, especially after the first pacification of La Vendée. But evils are not repaired by shifting the blame on others. Here are these scoundrels, not content with attacking me, would fain blow up a whole division of Paris. If the sentinel at the Opera had not driven off the cart, some thousands would have been mutilated and assassinated because these monsters seek my life. I repeat, this must be brought to an end. It is not a moment when the Republic, everywhere victorious, dictates laws to her enemies in the very bosom of their own country, that she will suffer herself to be crushed beneath the blows of flagitious profligates, assuming, as if by way of derision, a political pretence. Souls like these have no room for a sentiment so noble as patriotism; but because they rob diligences and tax-gatherers, knowing them to have always a well-furnished chest, therefore the knaves fancy they are making war on the Government. This is pitiable!"

"Citizen Consul," replied Fouché, "I can only repeat now what I have had the honour of telling you several times since the 2d of December. I expressed my individual opinion, when I said that so execrable a crime could only have been committed by the enemies rather of mankind than of the Republic, or your person. They attacked the Convention by force of arms on the 4th of October; they were in permanent conspiracy against the Directory, not because it was a worse Government to them than the convention or the committees, but because they are the enemies of all government. I am well aware of all that, Citizen Consul; and from the situation I occupy, I am perhaps better informed than others of all these

iniquities; but while I allow, with you, that some hundreds of bandits are spread over the surface of our beautiful France, effecting all the mischiefs we see, I say, that the hell which vomited these demons was not 1793."

The First Consul shrugged his shoulders; "And '*The Soldier and the Turk*' (Le Militaire et le Turc), was that dainty device produced by a pen under the dictation of England, or of all that is most extravagant in demagogical tenets?"

"That point is a main pillar of my argument, Citizen Consul; Metge, the author of the libel you have named, is one of those men whom great epochs always bring upon the stage. He resembles those clappers-in-chief, known for their instrumentality in the success or failure of a new piece; they are engaged in the pay of a certain author for one evening, and of another for the next: the two authors are perhaps enemies, but that signifies nothing to the clapper. It is the same with men of Metge's genus. You are in a sphere, Citizen Consul, from whence you discern none of the sordid shifts of policy. You see none of the *disgusting* parts,—I must use the word; nothing of the contrivance necessary to obviate the too rank odour of all these fetid matters. You have never wanted the services of Metge, and Metge likes you not, because he is sensible that from you he has nothing to expect but imprisonment; therefore, his ears opened eagerly to imbibe the fair promises, and his hands to receive the glittering golden guineas that were to guide his pen in the production of that rare chef-d'œuvre, *Le Turc et le Militaire Français.*"

"Come! there you are again with your *English committee!* Truly, I am not fond of England; that is to say, of her cabinet; but I think you are somewhat too unjust towards her."

"Citizen Consul, I am no longer young enough to be hurried away by the heat of prejudice; I draw my conclusions from facts. I have long known Metge, and can retrace my doubts and suspicions to a very distant date. Metge has no means of subsistence, and yet lives luxuri-

ously, at a pretty considerable daily expense, which he pays in ready money. Where does he get this money? He must be in the pay of the enemies of the Republic."

"But is it only England, then, that can dispense bribes for troubling the tranquillity of the State? Suspicions have been strongly awakened against Félix Lepelletier and Antonnelle. Does not Metge associate with these men? Is it not known that he was no stranger to the affairs of Ceracchi, Diana, Demerville, and Aréna? It appears even that the dagger he bore was to serve my turn if I fell in his way. He is a stanch blade though, this Metge; I hear that he defended himself like a lion: where was he taken?"

"In the passage Feydeau; it was very late, and the policemen employed in pursuit of him arrested him at first in the name of the law, without immediately securing his hands; so that he had time to seize a dagger, which he always carried about him, and to strike at the officer of police. He stabbed him several times, but fortunately wounded him only in the hand and wrist. One remarkable circumstance is, that for more than four months past he had not slept two consecutive nights in the same place. He carried on his business in a small room at Montmartre, and here those vile pamphlets were composed for which he was so benevolently paid—far beyond their value."

Two tribunes entered at this moment, and were received by the First Consul with extraordinary graciousness. The conversation proceeded in the same strain. Duveyrier was one of them; the First Consul conferred with him about a report he was to make in a few days relative to the establishment of special criminal tribunals.

These tribunals were particularly designed for the immediate punishment of the robbers and brigands who infested the roads of the Republic, and were at length beginning to excite commotions in the towns. The First Consul returned to this subject, and his discourse was admirable.

It was at such moments that he should have been seen and heard; he then exhibited a fire which diffused

life and warmth on all around him: I had never before seen him in so splendid a light, and I was more than astonished at it. Its effect upon me was at once seducing like an attractive charm, and strongly agitating from the conclusive and perfectly convincing brevity of his eloquence.

M. Portalis afterwards arrived; the First Consul met him, and taking his hand, led him to Madame Bonaparte. He had a great esteem for him. Portalis was not then afflicted with blindness; his sight was painful, but he did not yet require a guide. The First Consul spoke to him as soon as he entered about the preamble of the Code, which had been entrusted to him.

"You are idle, Citizen Portalis," said the First Consul, laughing. "You must make more haste; all the world is crying out after our Code; we must move quick where business is concerned."

"Ah! general," answered the worthy man, laughing in his turn, "you give others credit for your own gift of magic. As for you, you were endowed at your birth; but we, poor simple mortals, must feel our way soberly. Besides, do not you know, general, that our Code has only been a year concocting; and that a code of laws is an immense national monument, which requires time to erect. You have worked at it as well as we, and you know it is a skein not easily unravelled."

"Yes, certainly, certainly," said the First Consul; "but we must advance," he repeated, still; "we must advance: is the preamble ready?"

"The First Consul is well assured that I shall always fulfil, not my duty merely, but far more than my duty, to second his great and noble projects for the happiness of France," replied M. Portalis; "the preamble is completed."

"Ah! you are a good and excellent Frenchman!" said the First Consul; "well and good! I like such men as you and the brave Duveyrier. I am happy when I see such around me; and so seconded, I cannot do otherwise than well."

This conversation was the first of its kind I had heard the First Consul hold since my marriage; but though struck with admiration at the unconcerned manner in which, at such a crisis, he could discuss matters of life and death, having reference to himself, yet I could not have so accurately recalled his very words, and those of Fouché, had I not found the whole dialogue in writing amongst my husband's papers, which contain others equally curious, and throwing the same light on the characters of the interlocutors.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Lions born at Paris on the anniversary of the 18th Brumaire—Female breakfasts at the Tuileries—Madame de Vaines—The lioness *en couche*, and visit to the Ménagerie with Madame Bonaparte—The First Consul joining us at the Botanical Gardens—Marengo, the eldest of the lions—Bonaparte and Félix the keeper—The liar caught in the fact, and the crocodiles of the Bosphorus—Reminiscences of Egypt by the First Consul—The Psylli and the serpents.

THE important events just narrated have driven from my memory for a time several anecdotes and facts which happened, not only during the month of *Brumaire*, but on the anniversary of the 18th. One of them was the *accouchement* of the lioness of the Botanical Gardens, who had been delivered at her full time of three whelps, all living.[1] This was a subject of congratulation for the naturalists, who were thus enabled to observe many particulars relative to this noble animal. Some years since a lioness produced young at the Tower of London, but the circumstance threw no new light on the history of gestation.

I was engaged to breakfast with Madame Bonaparte at the Tuileries. Her custom of inviting young married women, too timid to make themselves agreeable in the society of superior men, was delightful to me. Chatting with Madame Bonaparte, during the perfectly unceremonious repast, upon fashions, and all the little interests

[1] While we are on the subject of beasts naturalising themselves thus in Republican France, I will add, that the first monkey born there saw the light in a little semicircular and gilded boudoir to be seen from the quai, and belonging to the Hôtel Labriffe.

of society, these young ladies acquired confidence, and threw off that reserve which the presence of the First Consul was calculated to inspire.

Madame Bonaparte did the honours with grace and vivacity; we were generally five or six, and all of the same age, the mistress of the house excepted. At Malmaison the number was sometimes twelve or fifteen, and the breakfast was served in a small circular salon looking into the court, and which is now present to my imagination, though I have not entered it these sixteen years. One day, at the Tuileries' breakfast, I met Madame Vaines, who was high in favour both with the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte, and another person, whose name I forget; all I remember is, that it must have been a female, for men were never admitted to these morning fêtes, the First Consul positively prohibiting it. Madame Bonaparte told us she was going to make a visit to a lying-in lady, and inquired if we would accompany her? We acceded, but begged to know in our turn who was the object of our visit. She answered, that to be sure it was a personage who might eat us, but that at present she was in a gentle mood; in short, it was the lioness of the Botanical Garden. The First Consul had been already there; but as Madame Bonaparte had informed him of her proposal, he had promised to join us if his engagements would permit.

The lioness was doing well, but was, as Madame Bonaparte had told us, in a languishing mood. Félix Cassal, her keeper, entered the cage, took the cubs from her, and the poor beast, without moving, turned her eyes on him with an expression of softness and affection. She was extended in her cage on a good litter, and her little ones lay rolled in thick coarse carpets, as warmly as in the African sands.

Madame Bonaparte took one of the cubs in her hands, which drew forth a growl from the mother; but Félix spoke to her, and acknowledging his voice by a momentary glance of more fierceness than the former, she again turned to the offender, and renewed her growl. Madame Bona-

parte was alarmed. "Oh! never fear," said Félix, "she is behind a strong grating, and besides, she has not yet recovered her strength, she would not hurt much."—"Oh!" said Madame Bonaparte, "I can dispense with the trial of her strength; there would be quite enough remaining to make me repent having caressed her son." This Cassal was an extraordinary man in his way. He was a great traveller; and had made interesting observations, even on the common habits of the country he had passed through; and though he pretended to have seen marvels altogether incredible, yet all he said was not false, and both amusement and instruction might be extracted from him. He had himself purchased the lioness of some Arabs, who had taken her in the environs of Constantinople. While she was *enceinte*, a child having wounded her in the eye with a stone, she threw herself into so violent a passion as to produce abortion; and as she brought forth the present litter a hundred days afterwards, that must have been the utmost extent of her parturition, which disproves the conjectures of Pliny and M. Buffon; the latter, I believe, asserts that the lioness is six or seven months with young.

She littered on the 18th Brumaire, and Félix named the first-born whelp Marengo. "Was not I a good godfather?" said he to Madame Bonaparte.

He made me touch one of the whelps; but the lioness, who had turned away and appeared to think no more of the matter, suddenly started up to her full height, and uttered a roar that shook the very walls.

Félix soothed her, and took the cub himself. He told us that the First Consul, on his visit to the lioness, had caressed her, and was very well received. "He inquired the hour of her delivery," said Félix; "the nature of her food, and especially of her beverage; and the general who was with him gave me a bright piece of gold, that the lioness might drink to the health of the Republic, a direction I have obeyed. Oh, he thinks of everything, the Citizen Consul!" While he spoke, I was meditating on the fortunes of this extraordinary man, which seemed

to be mysteriously linked with all the wonders of his age.

The First Consul met us on horseback before we had quitted the gardens, and Félix no sooner perceived him than he hurried forward to report the bulletin of the lioness; assuring him that she had drunk to his health, and that she was wonderfully well. Napoleon caressed her, and talked with Félix of all his beasts, with as much ease, and as perfect a knowledge of their properties and habits, as if this branch of science had been his particular study.

Félix, finding such encouragement, entered upon one of his best stories; but just as he arrived (on his own showing) at the most astonishing point, Napoleon patted him on the head with:

"Félix, you lie, my boy, there are no crocodiles in the place you speak of, nor ever were; but it is all one, proceed with your story."

This was more easily said than done. Félix was so thoroughly disconcerted by the First Consul's apostrophe, that it was impossible to recover the thread of his adventure.

"Well, it will do for another day," said Napoleon, good-humouredly; "only remember that crocodiles do not devour those who bathe in the Bosphorus, otherwise it would have been much easier to kill Leander by that means than by drowning, as he had no boat, poor fellow."

We promenaded for some time in these beautiful gardens and their fine greenhouses. They are greatly improved since; yet the Botanical Gardens were even then the most complete institution of the kind in Europe. Other museums were richer in particular articles, but ours alone possessed that superiority in all, which has since rendered it the universal rendezvous for the study of natural history. Napoleon observed that day, "It is my wish to render this the most attractive spot to all learned foreigners in Paris. I wish to draw them here to see and admire a people in their love of science and the arts. The museum of natural history shall be what those of sculpture and painting, and of ancient monuments, will be.

Paris should be the first city of the world. If God grant me a life long enough, I would have her become the capital of the universe, in science as well as power. Our painters are already the first, the best in Europe. Excepting Canova and Appiani, Italy herself cannot boast talents equal to ours in painting and sculpture. Their poets also are inferior to ours. Cesarotti and Alfieri cannot dispute the palm with our young writers. In short," added he, "I am proud of my country, and I would have her always mindful of what she is and may be."

We visited the Cabinet of Natural History. The First Consul, remarking on the length of a serpent from the island of Java, was reminded of those of Egypt, and consequently was led to speak of the Psylli. He joked much about Denon, who was bent on knowing the flavour of these creatures (not the Psylli, but the serpents), and Junot declared that the first he ate, on his initiation, seized his chin, and would not let it go, twisting itself five or six times round his chin, which in truth was immoderately long. Speaking of serpents, the First Consul related to us a droll incident that had occurred in his own house at Cairo. Junot was there, and has since repeated it to me much more at length.

One morning, at breakfast, the Psylli and serpents came under discussion. The general-in-chief said he believed only in the serpents. "I believe there are mountebanks in Egypt," added he, "as well as elsewhere. The Psylli exercise their juggling talents there, with even more facility than our men with a hazel wand display in France in searching in a kennel; and when a Psylle announces that he is going to eat a serpent, I verily believe he meets with more gapers than another would on the Pont Neuf."

"I assure you, general," said Junot, "that I have seen these men perform inconceivable feats. Do not think me more credulous than others; but I have seen the chief of those creatures do incomprehensible things."

"What! the chief of the serpents!" said the general-in-chief.

"No, general, the chief of the Psylli. You may rally me, but on my honour it would astound you to see his performances."

"I tell you they are mountebanks, and nothing else. Hold! you shall have proof. Go instantly to the chief of the Psylli," said he to a domestic interpreter, "send him here, with two of his men."

The chief of the Psylli lost no time in answering the summons. As soon as he arrived the general-in-chief told him, through the medium of the interpreter: "There are two serpents in this house, find them, and thou shalt have two sequins (12 francs) for thyself, and as much for thy followers."

The Psylle prostrated himself, and requested two troughs filled with water. When they were brought he stripped himself naked as at his birth, then filled his mouth with water, laid himself flat on his face, and began creeping, in imitation of the reptile he was in search of, and spouting the water through his closed teeth to mimic its hissing. When he had in this manner made the tour of the ground floor, sweeping the house with his person, he returned, and placing himself all naked and dirty as he was, before the general-in-chief, said to him with a savage laugh, "*Mafiche, Mafiche*,"[1] which signifies "there are none." The general-in-chief echoed his laugh, and said, "*Comment diable!* can this idiot really play the magician with some truth?" And he ordered the interpreter to give the Psylle to understand that the serpent had been seen. "Oh! I know that," said the Psylle. "I felt it on entering the house."

"There, now," said the general-in-chief; "now the comedy is beginning. Well; seek thy serpent, and if thou findest it thou shalt have two additional sequins." The Psylle returned to his artifices, climbed with the same manœuvres a staircase which led to the upper story, where Bourrienne lodged, pursued by a troop of inquisitors with the general-in-chief at their head, who

[1] Perhaps I write the word incorrectly; but I am not bound to understand the Arab orthography.

determined not to lose sight of his magician. The corridor was lighted by a loophole overlooking the country, and through which the perfect and unvarying azure of the beautiful Egyptian sky was distinguishable. The Psylle closed his eyes and shuddered. "There is your actor beginning his part," said the First Consul to Junot. The serpent-detector, however, after several repetitions of his antics, said in a low voice, "There he is!"—"I shall be delighted to have the pleasure of paying him the honours of hospitality," said the general-in-chief; "but, my friend, I think thou art mocking us. Dost know that this animal with his hissing music has completely mystified us for the last hour, making us run about with parasols after his imaginary serpentship?" The Psylle, nowise discouraged, still crept and hissed about, till presently an actual serpent was seen to interpose its opaque line across the loophole, and was heard answering with fraternal good-will the hissing of the Psylle; it was six feet in length, and Junot has assured me that its eyes sparkled through the dusky corridor like a bright fire. It approached the Psylle, and was no sooner within his reach than he caught it with incredible address in one hand, just below the jaw-bone, in such a manner as to oblige the mouth to open, when, spitting into it, the effect was like magic; the reptile appeared struck with instant death, and, during his lethargy, the enchanter, by some peculiar operation, extracted the venom from his teeth, or rather, from his gums.

"Well, my general, what say you to this adventure?" asked Junot of the general-in-chief.

"What would you have me answer to an effect of chance? Your Psylle is a lucky impostor, that is all."

END OF VOL. I.

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